

"Never forsake God and
He will never forsake
you".

see page 29. 32.-

M^{rs} Henry Vandenberg
from his father

October 1871. —

Mr. Henry Combs
from his father

October 1871



She pressed one hand to her breast, lifted the other up to heaven.
Helen of the Glen.

HELEN OF THE GLEN;

A TALE

OF

THE SCOTCH COVENANTERS.

By ROBERT POLLOK,

AUTHOR OF THE COURSE OF TIME, &c.

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HELEN OF THE GLEN.

CHAPTER I.

One there is, above all others,
Well deserves the name of friend !
His is love beyond a brother's,
Costly, free, and knows no end :
They who once his kindness prove,
Find it everlasting love !

Doddridge

It is pleasant, young reader, to contemplate in our day, the peace of the Redeemer's kingdom in Scotland. The Lord is indeed the glory in the midst of his church, and a wall of fire round about her. The still small voice of the gospel is unrestrained by the menaces of power, and its light unobscured by the clouds of bigotry and superstition. Our assemblies meet, and worship, and part in peace. In our land the promise is fast accomplishing. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." The church in our land, like a well-watered

garden, and like a spring of waters, now sends forth her streams into the dry and parched wilderness, and sheds her light on the people that sit in darkness. Her voice, harmonizing with the invitations of infinite mercy, is now addressed to all nations: inviting them to share in the same heavenly blessings.

But it is right for us to remember, young reader, that it was not always so in our beloved island. Only a hundred and forty years ago, persecution, and nakedness, and cold, and hunger, was the lot of those who followed the Lamb whithersoever he went. The sheep of the great Shepherd wandered upon the mountains, and the hands of the men of power were defiled with their blood.

Such were the perilous and bloody days in which Helen and William, the subject of this story, were ushered into life. Their father, James Thomson, although born in the moorish districts of Ayrshire, removed early in life to Glasgow, with Agnes Craig, his beloved wife. Mr. Thomson was for some years prosperous enough in business: but the unsuspecting sincerity of his character often met with duplicity, and his generous kindness with ingratitude. Reduced by various losses to bankruptcy, he was compelled to leave Scotland. To support himself, and send something, if possible, for the assistance of his family, he

entered the service of king Charles II. followed the army to the continent, and in a short time after died in Holland, fighting bravely for his sovereign.

His farewell with his wife had been short and hurried. He advised her to return with her little ones, Helen and William, the former of whom was then four, and the latter two years old. to her native place ; recommended them to their Father in heaven ; and the last words which Mrs. Thomson's ear caught from that voice which she was to hear no more, were these : " O my dear Agnes, teach these little ones to know and remember their Creator in the days of their youth, that if I see you and them no more in this valley of tears, I may meet you and them at last by the river of life, in the paradise of God."

Immediately after this painful parting, Mrs. Thomson returned to the place of her birth, in the neighbourhood of Loudon-hill. I need not tell the young reader, with what feelings she crossed the little moor-streams, by which she was wont to walk with her James—now she looked up the winding glen, where her ear had often turned to his affectionate voice, or listened with still more solid delight, while he read a chapter from the book of God, to dissipate their fears, and strengthen their hopes of eternal life—now, her eyes streaming at

once with joy and sorrow, fell back on her little William, the dear miniature of his father. A steady habit of industry; the remembrance of a youth spent in religion; her two infants, and an unwavering trust in the kindness of her Maker and Redeemer, were all the riches which Mrs. Thomson brought home to the place of her nativity. Her near relations thinned away by the hand of disease, or cut off by the sword of persecution, had left her father's house desolate. George Paton, a man who had been her father's shepherd, now possessed the farm. He received the daughter of his former master kindly; assigned her a snug hut, in which, while a servant, he lived himself, and gave her a cow that her infants might not be without milk, which the old shepherd very properly observed was the best liquid Scotland produced, except water.

Cleughhead, the name of this little habitation, was situated at the head of one of those solitary glens, so common in the wilder districts of Scotland. The walls were built with rough granite; the roof thatched with the heath of the mountain, and the rushes of the brook; and the interior, where the peat burned on the hearth, and the smoke rose up unconfined by any chimney, till it escaped by a little hole in the roof, although very unlike the

abode Mrs. Thomson had left in Glasgow, was soon rendered, by her own industry and native cleanliness, and the ready assistance of the old farmer, neat and comfortable.

Past the door of this humble dwelling, feebly murmured a mountain rill: as it rambled in frolicsome meanders down the slope, now kissing the blooming heath, now rippling among the green rushes, and again playing with the shadow of the grey-willow, its channel deepened as the sides of the glen drew nearer one another. Here the projecting rock and crooked hazel on the one side, and the tall fern and stunted sloethorn on the other, mingled their dancing shadows on the torrent, which loud and impetuous, forced its headlong way, like the youth impatient for full manhood. Again the glen gradually opened; the spreading stream giving back the image of the sober ox, and sportive lamb, that cropt the verdant herb and wild daisy by its side; and at length smoothening its surface, laying asleep every turbulent wave, purifying its waters on the gravelly sand of its course, and reflecting the heaven only from its clear bosom, fell, like the dying Christian without a murmur, into the current of the Irvin. The general features of the surrounding scenery were impressed with an air of solemn melancholy. To the north and east extended level

tracts of gloomy moorland, relieved, here and there, by the smoke curling from the shepherd's lonely hut, a straggling dwarf tree or two which grew about his dwelling, and the little verdant meadow plot redeemed from the dark waste, which lay before his door. At intervals too were to be seen a shepherd boy with his dog; and spreading around him, in little groupes, here and there scattered and solitary, the white-fleeced sheep wandering on the brown heath. To the south and south-west, rose the unambitious hills of Dumfries and Galloway; and conspicuous among them with its round head, the *Twelve-hour* hill, over whose head, the shepherds of that country well knew, the sun walks at mid-day. Spread out to the west were the fertile, but monotonous district of Ayrshire, watered by those streams, delightfully romantic when you approach them, Ayr, Irvin, and Doon, which carried the eye down their course till it reposed on the glassy bosom of the Atlantic, oftener in those days visited by the dreadful war-ship, than enlivened by the cheerful sail of the merchantman. Terminating the view in this direction, was the bold elevations of Arran, on whose castled peaks the cloud delights to sit, and from whose tops the sun of autumn cast his last look of glory on the western districts of Scotland.

In this humble dwelling, surrounded thus by the chaste and solemn countenance of nature, did Mrs. Thomson set herself diligently to educate her children : to imbue their minds early with habits of industry ; and above all, to bring them up in the fear of the Lord ; to teach them to know their Creator in the days of their youth. Every morning and evening, she went, leading Helen in the one hand, and William in the other, to the farm house, and joined with the old Shepherd in worshipping the God of salvation. Early on the dawn of every Sabbath was Agnes up, and prepared, not with the anointed hair, and tinkling ornaments, which employ so much the thoughts of many females on the morning of the Lord's day, but by communing with her own heart, and by expostulating with her God in private for setting out, often five, sometimes six, seven, or eight miles, to hear preached the glad tidings of eternal life. And in those days, surely you know, young reader, it was no smooth road, no pleasure walk, to the house of God, Every one sat not then, as we do now, "under his own vine and fig-tree, having none to make him afraid;" but the solitary moor-hut, the glen of the mountain, or the cave of the rock, were often the only places in which the voice of the true servants of God, the shepherds that shall never need to be ashamed,

could be heard. Even here the bloody fiend of persecution pursued them with fire and sword. The meetings, or conventicles, as they were called, of these poor artless Christians, were often dispersed by the insolent and merciless soldiers; many were taken, and sent, some to the gibbet, some to dungeons, and many to the British plantations abroad. And all this because they assembled themselves to seek the Lord God of their fathers, in the way which their conscience approved.

But with her daily attention on family worship at the farm house, and meeting on as many Sabbaths as possible with the pious peasants around, Mrs. Thomson's religious duties by no means terminated. Often would she kneel down, with her son and daughter at her side, by the streamlet that purled down her secluded glen, and seek, with the fervency of a mother's heart which trusts in God, that her Father in heaven would shed down upon them that blessing that maketh rich, and bringeth no sorrow. And never did she unbend her knee, or turn her eye from the heaven on which it gazed, without watering her cheek with one drop in behalf of her dear husband. "If," would she plead aloud, as she kneeled by the heathy knoll, or ferny glen, and seen only by God and angels, "if, O gracious Father thou shouldst never give him to these aims

nor bless these eyes with another sight of his countenance in this world, O give him that faith in Christ which shall open to him the gates of heaven! If thou shouldst lay his bones to rest in a foreign land, O may I meet him at last without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, in that happy place where friends part no more." Every day too she read a portion of the Bible, and taught her children to read it; taught them to understand much of it; and, above all, taught them, and chiefly by her own example, to reverence and obey it.

Thus would she converse with Helen, for William was yet too young to profit much by her instructions. How great, my dear, is the love of God in Christ Jesus! You read in the Bible that we are all sinners; that is, we all naturally hate God, and God hates us because we are not holy, or willing to be made holy. You read in the Bible, that in Adam all died, and became liable to the wrath and curse of God: and you know that we sin every day against God ourselves. The thoughts of our hearts are evil continually. This is our condition, my dear Helen, this is our sad condition by nature. Do you feel it to be sad? Would you like to be out of it? I love you, my dear, and I can do much for you; but I cannot take away your sins, I cannot

make your peace with God. None of your friends—no man in the world—no angel in heaven can pardon your sins. What then are you to do? How great, as I said, is the mercy of God in Christ! In your low and lost estate, he remembers you with love. When there was no other eye to pity, no other hand to help, God said, “Deliver from going down to hell, for I have found a ransom.” This ransom is Jesus Christ, who came into the world, and suffered and died that we might live. You remember that he say, “Suffer little children to come to me, and forbid them not.” If you come unto him—if you believe that he died for your sins, God will pardon you, and be forever at peace with you.

But you will ask me, my dear, how you can believe in Christ. You must pray to God, that you may have this belief. You remember what our Saviour says himself, “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.” The Holy Spirit will help you to pray. Paul tells us, “That the Holy Ghost maketh intercession for us, with groanings that cannot be uttered.” “Whatever ye ask in my name,” says the kind Redeemer, “it shall be given to you.”

So great, my dear is the loving kindness

of our gracious and heavenly Father. And surely you will love, and obey so merciful a God. You love me, and do all I wish you, because I love you, and am, as you often tell me, good to you: but you see that God loves you far more, and has done far more good for you; you should love him therefore more than me, or any of your friends, or any thing in the world, and you are to show your love to him by living in his fear, by keeping his commandments, by doing all the good you can, wherever you may be placed.

“Remember these things, my dear Helen,” would the pious and affectionate mother say in conclusion—“Remember these things. You know not how soon you may die; or how soon you may lose your mother. You hear of people dying every day in their beds, or of their lives being taken away by the cruel persecutors. If I should be removed from you, your best instructor would be your Bible. Read it, dear Helen, and read it often.”

I repeat to you, young reader, Mrs. Thomson’s injunctions to her daughter—“Read the Bible, and read it often.”

It is surprising to notice how this sacred book is neglected by sinful men. The votaries of taste and fashion, will spend their days and nights, poring over the morbid pages of sensual and fictitious narrative; yet if their

God was to ask them, if they had read the book which he sent them from heaven, where would they look? How could they say that they had never read the precious gift throughout? Wherever you go learn not of those. Take your Bible in your hand; make it the companion of your way. In the thirsty desert of this world, it will supply you with the water of life; in the darkness of doubt and apprehension, it will cast a gleam of heaven over your path; in the struggle of temptation, and the hour of affliction, it will lift up the voice of warning, encouragement, and comfort. Never let the Bible lie by you unperused. It is the only helm that can guide you through the ocean of life, and bring you safely to the immortal shores. It is the only star that leads the wandering sinner by the rocks, and breakers, and fiery tempests of utter destruction and points him a way to the heights of everlasting blessedness. The Bible contains the only food that can satisfy the hungerings of the soul; it presents us with the only laver in which we can wash ourselves white and clean; it alone tells us of the garments that are worn in the courts of heaven; it is from the Bible alone that we learn to prepare a torch to conduct our footsteps through the valley of the shadow of death; and it is the Bible alone

which can introduce us at last to the glories of immortality!"

While Mrs. Thomson was thus teaching her children habits of industry, and disclosing to their young minds the hopes of a better life, she received the account of her husband's death, mentioned above. The tears of love, and desolateness, and religion, mingled on her cheek. Although Helen and William remembered little of their father, yet so often had their mother told them of all his kindness to her, and love to them; so often had she repeated to them his last advice and prayer; and so often had she told them, that he would perhaps come in some day to their little hut, that they sobbed by their mother's side in the same bitterness of grief as if their father had died among them. But the good widow sorrowed not as those who have no hope. The letter which brought the painful account, informed her, that her husband died a good soldier of Jesus Christ. He was heard on the bloody field of battle recommending, with his last breath his widowed wife, and fatherless children, to the God of the widow and the fatherless: "And God will hear the sincere request," said the tender mother, as she wiped her tears, and threw a gleam of celestial hope, and patient resignation on her weeping children; "God is the widow's stay: he is the father of the father-

ess • he forsakes none who put their trust in him. To wean us from our sins, and earthly attachments, he may afflict us for a moment; but with an everlasting love hath he loved us. Be comforted, my dear children; remember your Creator, as your father ever wished you to do, and you will meet him at last in heaven, to be fatherless no more, to weep no more, and to part no more for ever."

In Mrs. Thomson's outward circumstances, her husband's death produced no difference. She often assisted in the old farmer's dairy, and received in return food, and home-made clothing for herself and her children. Nor was her mind much altered. The violence of her grief subsided into a firmer trust in God, more fervent religion, and more heavenly-mindedness. Indeed, this event threw a thoughtfulness and an unrepining melancholy over all her character, which expanded every sympathy of her nature, deepened every feeling of her soul, and warmed every act of her devotion, as the lingering looks of day cast a mellower softening, and a richer grandeur over the widely variegated landscape

CHAPTER II.

—————In solitudes like these
Thy persecuted children, Scotia, foiled
A tyrant's and a bigot's bloody laws :
There, leaning on his spear,

* * * * *

The lyart veteran heard the word of God
By Cameron thundered, or by Renwick poured
In gentle stream ; then rose the song, the loud
Acclaim of praise ; the wheeling plover ceased
Her plaint ; the solitary place was glad,
And on the distant cairns, the watcher's ear
Caught doubtfully at times the breeze-born note.

Graham.

MEANWHILE, the rage and cruelty of persecution grew every day more inveterate. Claverhouse, whose merciless sword widowed many a tender mother, and orphaned many a helpless infant, about this time, was routed at Loudon-hill, by a party of the Covenanters, whose sufferings had driven them to arms. This event stung to the heart the proud, bold and cruel Claverhouse. Backed by soldiers imbued with his own spirit, he neglected no exertions to pursue, torture, and kill all who could not renounce the service of their Father

in heaven, for the vassalage of an earthly tyrant. Sometime before this, military trial was instituted in Scotland: and all who refused the wicked test, were instantly shot by the soldiers. The brutal dragoons plundered, tortured, murdered, and committed every species of outrage at pleasure. At no hour, in no place, whether in the house, the glen, or the cave of the mountain, were the scattered sheep of the Great Shepherd safe from the persevering search, and unrelenting cruelty of their persecutors.

“ Every hour.

They stood prepared to die, a people doomed
To death;—old men, and youths, and simple maids.”

It was thus in the western districts of Scotland, when, on a fine Sabbath morning, a little after mid-summer, Mrs. Thomson was early up, and preparing, as usual, to hear the word of God, which was to be preached that day two miles down the glen, at the head of which the widow's hut stood. She left William, yet only in his sixth year, in the farm-house, and with Helen by her side, took the little sheep path, down the glen. In her hallowed imagination, the sun coming up the rosy east unclouded, threw a purer ray over the solitary moor-lands; a clearer dew sparkled on the red heather-bell; the matin hymn of the skylark, the varied music of the desert fowl, the

bleating of the flocks, that answered from knoll to knoll, the minstrelsy of the brook, and the gentle sigh, of the zephyr that plied among the wild mountain flowers, all assumed a character, holier cadence, and seemed to confess the presence of the blessed day. Here and there was seen, over the brown moor, like vessels scattered on the ocean, the solitary peasant, travelling towards the glen, to meet the servant of God. Little Helen, with a profusion of fair ringlets, already floating on her neck and shoulders, now plucked the wild thyme, now looked to the playful chases of the lamb, and anon listened to her mother, while she admonished her to hear the gospel with reverence and attention.

Thus engaged, they arrived at the place agreed on for meeting with the faithful ambassador of Jesus. The man of God was already there; and his little congregation mostly gathered around him. The place chosen for this day's worship of the Most High, was hidden from the distant view by the sides of the glen; one of which, withdrawing five or six yards from the streamlet, left a small green plain in the shape of a crescent. Here rose a large grey stone, on which the minister rested the holy book. Before him, on the rising ground, trode by the sheep into paths rising one above another, resembling a flight of

stairs sat his rustic audience, thirsting for the water of life. On a knoll, at a small distance, watched one of their friends to give the alarm in case of the appearance of the persecuting soldiers. The minister, to whose church Mrs. Thomson, in her earlier days, often walked with her father and mother, had been driven from his flock, and his family, by violence; and now, concealed by the peasants who loved him, and fed by their kindness, he took every opportunity which offered, in the cave, the moor, or the sheep-cot, to distribute among the poor hunted followers of the cross, the bread and the water of life. His figure was graceful, of the ordinary size; his countenance mild, full of resignation and heavenly zeal. Time had left his forehead bare; but behind, and on each side, flowed down plentiful locks, wooly, and white as the snow, of the mountains.

The venerable man now threw a glance of fatherly compassion on his little flock, lifted the Bible from the grey stone, opened it, and read these verses from that mournful Psalm, sung by the Israelitish captives at Babylon

“By Babel's streams we sat and wept,
When Sion we thought on.
In midst thereof we hanged our harps
The willow-trees upon.

For there a song required they,
Who did us captive bring:

Our spoilers called for mirth, and said,
A song of Sion sing.

“O how the Lord’s song shall we sing
Within a foreign land?
If thee, Jerusalem, I forget,
Skill part from my right hand.

My tongue to my mouth a roof cleave,
If I do thee forget,
Jerusalem, and thee above
My chief joy do not set.”

To the wild plaintive notes of Old Martyrs, this sweet melody, from hearts full of gratitude and love, and calm resignation, ascended to the ear of the Eternal. The Psalm being ended, all arose; and the holy man turning an eye of faith to the heavens, led the congregation in a prayer, humble, fervent, and appropriate. Again he opened the Bible, and read his text from Proverbs ix. 10. and xxix. 25. “The fear of man bringeth a snare—but the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”

The sermon, though perplexed with divisions, and obscured occasionally by length of illustration was affectionate, impressive, and highly enriched with quotations, from the Holy Scripture. The folly of fearing man rather than God, the everlasting security of those who fear and obey the Almighty, and the eternal confusion of those who put his fear away from them, were clearly proved, and strongly enforced by numberless passages from the volume of inspiration. As he came

to the exhortation, generally the most useful part of sermons, his voice elevated, his language glowed with a deeper pathos, and, seeming to forget the present sufferings of his audience, in the awful idea, that there might be some fearless sinner among them in jeopardy of eternal wrath, he expostulates with them thus :

“ O that I could speak of the goodness and mercy of God, manifested thro’ the Saviour, as to win the love and obedience of you that fear him not ! O that I had the tongue of an angel, to tell you how much God hath done for you, and how unwilling he is that you should put his mercy away from you ! Do ye not know that all your enjoyments come from God. That those lips which never praised him sincerely, and those knees which never bowed before him reverently, are the work of his hands : and that your memories that forget him, and your reasons that despise him, and your imaginations that ever wandered from him, are the gifts of his goodness ? Are you ignorant that the clothes which warm you, and the food which nourishes you, and the houses which shelter you, come all from the God whom you refuse to fear ? Do you not know that your sweet and tender endearments of loves, and brotherhoods, and friendships—that all which delights your eye, or soothes

your ear, or warms your heart, descend from the Father of lights, whom ye will not honour? And have ye not heard, that God hath not yet removed his mercy from you? Will ye believe it, the everlasting Jehovah, whom ye daily offend, is yet beseeching you to accept of his pardon, is yet waiting to be gracious, is yet tiring the voice of his mercy to win you from your waywardness, and save you from the fierceness of his wrath? Will ye believe it, the God for whom ye have no reverence, is yet casting a fatherly eye upon you, offering his own Son for your redemption, and inviting you up to the land of life and glory? Truly the heart that is not won by this, is harder than the nether millstone, and deserves the anguish that shall wring it.

“But if ye will not hear; and if ye will not consider; if ye will harden your heart, and not be persuaded to the fear of the Lord by his love, and his mercy, I dare not leave you unwarned. I must ask you to look on God’s wrath, and measure your arms with the weapons of his indignation. Are ye prepared for this, ye that fear not the Almighty? God is your Judge, and will ye not fear him? Eternity is at his disposal, and will ye have no reverence for him? Are ye afraid of death? The God, whom we counsel you to fear, keeps the gates of immortality. Have ye not heard

that there is a place where the fire is not quenched, and where the worm dieth not? Have ye not heard, that in hell the devils believe and tremble? And have ye not known that it is God, even the God whom ye will not fear, whose wrath kindles the everlasting burnings, and whose frown thickens the eternal darkness? Surely 'the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.'

"You that fear God as ye ought, and I trust there are few of another character here," continued the herald of heaven, "are safe from every evil. Your fear is a holy fear: it is the offspring of love: it is a filial awe, accompanied by the trust, and the expectation, and the affection of children to a father, who shields your hearts from every alarm. You know that all your present afflictions are but the chastisement of a father—who loves you with an everlasting love. 'God so loved the world,' so loved you, my dear friends, 'that he delivered up his Son unto the death, that whosoever believeth in him may not perish, but have everlasting life: and if he has given us his Son, his only and well-beloved Son, shall he not with him freely give us all things? O the breadth, and the length, and the heighth, and the depth of the love of God. It passeth understanding'—yea, the response of your heart is—it passeth understanding. It is this love

of God—it is this love in your hearts, which rouses you to all duty, cheers you in every distress, and supports you in every trial. Can you look upon the tender mercy of God in Christ Jesus,—can you look upon his everlasting love, and hesitate for a moment to prefer his statutes, which are all holy, and just and good, to the laws of wicked and cruel men? Will you offend the gracious God who hath all power in heaven, and in earth, who preserved Daniel in the lion's den, and the three children in the midst of the burning fiery furnace, or your persecutors, who pass away as the wind, and are crushed before the moth? Will you fear to offend the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who loves you as a father loves his children, who rests in his love to you, who will never leave you or forsake you? or will you fear to offend those who seek your life, and hate you with a perfect hatred? Verily, it is the answer of your hearts, We will fear our God, for he hath loved us: we love him, and we will obey him. We will follow him through good, and through bad report. Well done, may I not say, good and faithful servants—ye shall enter into the joy of your Lord. O ye that love and fear the Lord, here is comfort, and support, and safety to your souls. God loves you; the God of life, and of death. Why should your

hearts be dismayed or disquieted within you ? The Captain of your salvation hath overcome the world ; he hath vanquished death and hell, and he hath gone to the Father, to prepare mansions of peace, of happiness, of immortality, for your reception. If God be for you, who can be against you ? He stands on your right hand, and bids you fear no evil. In this hour of trial and desolation, he puts his left hand under you, and his right hand embraces you. When ye walk through the fire, ye shall not be burnt ; neither shall the flames kindle upon you. Persecution, and reproach, and death, and hell, are now banded against you, but the God of all your salvation, and all your desire, stands by your side, and ye shall be more than conquerors. What shall separate you, that fear God, from this everlasting love ? Verily, it shall be neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come. He regards you as the apple of his eye.—In your afflicted pilgrimage through this world he shall hide you under the shadow of his wings ; he shall walk with you through the dreariness of the valley of death ; and set you down for ever at the banqueting table in the heavens. This is the promise of God—of him who is the Amen, the Faithful, and the true Witness. As thy days are, O Christian so shall thy

strength be. With this merciful, this blessed assurance, may we not exclaim in the midst of all our afflictions, Gracious is the Lord, and righteous ; yea, our God is merciful. Return unto thy rest, O my soul ; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.'

The sermon was just finished, and the minister again offering up his heart's desire to God, when the sentinel gave the alarm, that a party of cavalry was approaching. The venerable minister looked to his audience—then to heaven, and in a tone of assurance and resignation pronounced these words ; "Into thy hands, O Lord, we commit our immortal spirits." The congregation then dispersed hurriedly. The good old servant of God entreated them all to leave him, knowing, that, as a price had been set on his head, the pursuit after him would be most eager. It happened as he thought. The reverend pastor was taken—placed on horse-back—his hands tied behind his back—and his ankles twisted with ropes below the belly of the animal. In this position, without refreshment, without being permitted once to alight, he was driven to Edinburgh, a distance of fifty miles, where, after much torture, he was executed at the Grass-market, praising his God, solacing his friends, and forgiving his murderers, with his last breath. Surely the latter end of

the righteous man, whatever be his external condition, is peace.

Mrs. Thomson and her daughter had fled up the glen, and were now within a mile of their hut, when two of the troopers discovered them. As they approached, with their prancing steeds, and gleaming armour, uttering "strange oaths," Helen turned pale, and seized her mother's hand. The soldiers appeared rather intoxicated, and their whole aspect was fierce and cruel. One of them, Duncan Wrathburn, a north countryman, full of the merciless spirit of his master Claverhouse commanded Mrs. Thomson to take the test, or the shot that was in his carabine. She knelt before them—pleaded with them not to force her to violate the dictates of her conscience, and to renounce her allegiance to the King of kings. "None of your canting," bawled Wrathburn; and with a horrible oath, commanded her again to take the test, to abjure conventicles, or else he would blow out her brains on the spot. "I will not abjure my religion, and my God," said Mrs. Thomson, "but O spare a poor widow—spare me for the sake of my husband, who died fighting for his king—spare me for the sake of that child, and her little brother—spare me as you expect mercy at the judgment of the great day. The good widow having refused again to vio-



But Wrathburn, steady in his unmercifulness, leveled his carbine.
Helen of the Glen,

ate her conscience, and dishonour her Redeemer, by submitting to their unlawful demands, Wrathburn, in a tone of jeering and ridicule, said she had better pray, and confess herself quickly, as she had not a moment to live. It was vain to entreat these men of Belial more. Mrs. Thomson looked with a streaming eye on her daughter. "They will kill your mother," she said, "you shall be left helpless orphans," remembering William as she spoke, "you shall be left helpless orphans in the world; but God will be your father—never forsake him, and He will never forsake you. And O my dear Helen! you know something of the Christian religion; instruct your little brother, that I may receive you both at last into the happy place." "Short, short," cried the cruel dragoon, taking hold of his carabine. The poor widow now turned her eyes to heaven, and commanded her soul into the hands of her Redeemer. The soldier who accompanied Wrathburn, softened by the tears of the mother, and the shrieks of the daughter, urged him to let the poor widow escape. But Wrathburn, steady in his unmercifulness, levelled his carabine, and as Mrs Thomson's eyes were turning again from heaven on her dear child, fired the mortal shot. It took effect in her left side, touched the heart, and passed fairly through her body. Her

head fell back heavily against the ground—she threw a dim look on her daughter—seemed to breathe the blessing she could not pronounce—drew her arms convulsively over her breast—again they fell back on the heath—and her soul ascended up on high.

“Her blood be on her own head,” cried the brutal dragoon, as he turned his horse, and galloped away, unmoved by the expiring agonies of the mother, or her little daughter that swooned by her bloody corpse.

And, O! shall he need no mercy himself? When disease shall lay its withering hand upon him, and cast him on his last bed—when every sublunary hold shall deceive him—and when hope shall take its leave of him—and when his desire shall fail, and the sun, and the light withdraw itself—and the silver chord be loosed, and the golden bowl broken—and the wheel broken at the cistern—and the dimness, and dizziness, and terrors of death, fasten upon him—shall he have no lack of the smile of God’s countenance? Is he sure that he can enter the gates of death alone, and take a fearless view of the grim and ghastly visage of the king of terrors, and find his unguided way through the valley of thick darkness? Shall he be stout-hearted enough to listen unalarmed to the notes of the last trumpet—and see the earth pass away, and the sun

darkened, and the stars falling, and the moon turned into blood, and the heavens rolled up like a scroll—and the Son of man coming in the clouds to judgment? When he hears the footsteps of the summoning angels, and draws near the tribunal, and sees the books opening, and the face of the Judge frowning, and the sword of eternal justice flaming—shall he have no need of an Almighty Friend? Is he prepared to take his last sight of God's mercy—and all that is good, and all that is happy? Is he prepared to abide the unmitigated wrath of Jehovah—and take into his bosom the worm that dieth not—and make his dwelling in the fire that is not quenched—and converse with utter despair, and utter destruction—and hear the gates of hell shut behind him, and the bolts of his fate driven deep for ever and ever. Ah, cruel soldier! thou art not prepared for this.

The old farmer's shepherd having heard the mortal shot, came up to the place where the body of Mrs. Thomson lay. Little Helen, recovered from her swoon, clung to her mother's breast, and with her arms clasped about her neck, wept, and cried, "My mother, O my mother! will you speak to me no more—will you lead me no more by the hand, and tell me of my father, of Christ, and of heaven." The shepherd endeavoured to

soothe the child: "Your mother is gone," said he, "to meet your father, where Christ dwells. She is happy; and wishes you to be comforted. And if you be a good girl, you shall see her when you go to heaven, more lovely, more kind than ever."

Talking in this way, the shepherd led Helen to the farm house, and made known to the inmates the mournful story. The body of Mrs. Thomson was carried into the house; and it was indeed a day of mourning and lamentation in the house of the old farmer. Every one wept, as if he had lost a mother; so much was Mrs. Thomson loved by young and old for her sober cheerfulness, modest piety, and kind instructions in righteousness. Little William wept aloud: and it was an affecting sight to see Helen, while weeping herself, trying to soothe and comfort her brother. It may be supposed that she could not remember the whole of her mother's dying advice; but her ear had caught these words, and they were imprinted on her memory for ever, "Never forsake God, and he will never forsake you. Instruct your little brother, that I may receive you both at last into heaven." "We shall go to our mother in the happy place," said Helen to her little brother; "I have heard her say and I have read in the Bible, that Christ loves

little children like us; and if we be good, he will come, and take us to our mother."

While Helen talked thus, William would wipe his eyes, and seem now to believe, now to mistrust her words. Again would they remember the pale lips, and motionless eye of their mother, and burst into tears; and again, the hope of meeting her gleamed on their souls, as, clasped in one another's arms, the two orphans wept themselves fast asleep, while the darkness of night came down on the untenanted hut of Cleugh-head.

On the Tuesday following, the old farmer gathered two or three of his friends, and the remains of Mrs. Thomson were committed to the dust, near the spot, as was frequently the case in those days, where she died a martyr to the holy religion of Jesus.

How much ridicule soever, young reader, irreligion, or misguided genius may throw on her memory, or the memories of those like her, it is to her, and to those like her, that we owe much of our civil liberty, and the plentiful streams of the water of life, which flow to-day in the midst of our land. And shall the Christian take up the books of those who deliberately laugh at their memories, and laugh along with them? Shall the Christian hear their sufferings jeered at, their motives misconstrued, and their doings misrepresent-

ed, and yet give a smile of half approbation? Were our persecuted ancestors robbed of their goods? were they hunted like wild beasts of the mountains? were they imprisoned? were they tortured? were they banished? were they murdered? Did they eat the bread of affliction, and drink the water of affliction, and watch at cold midnight, in the caves, and the dens of the wilderness? Did they set their breasts of heavenly heroism to the floods and the fires of hellish rage, that the manna of life might never be driven from our native land? Did their blood flow on the scaffold, and their groans lament on the desert, that we should drink in abundance, the streams of life, and listen unmolested to the glad tidings of salvation? Did they keep unslumbering watch on our hills, when the storms, and the tempests, and the darkness of hell howled and thickened over our beloved land, that we might walk in the clear, and peaceful day of the Son of Righteousness? Were their patience, and fortitude, and faith, and suffering, and death, made a spectacle to men and angels? Did the seraphim sing them a higher note? did God lean down from the eternal heights, well-pleased to behold them, and shall we, their offspring, forget their memories, or remember them with ridicule?

While the pious peasants pressed the heathy turf on the silent house, and mingled their tears with the streamlet that seemed to lament down the glen, Helen and William holding one another by the hand, stood by the grave and wept. "This shall be my church," said Helen; "here will I read my Bible; here will I pray; here will I repeat to you William, our mother's last advice."

CHAPTER III.

Ah ! how unwise the busy fluttering race,
Who, from themselves, to wanton tumults fly ;
Their reason lost in passion's thorny maze,
No ray divine beams through their troubled sky ;
Awhile they rave, and in their raving die.
Ah ! there, my son's a waste of human woes !
There lions prowl, and filthy harpies cry !
There syrens lull the mind to curst repose—
But in this waste serene, the soul is far from foes.

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AFTER the death of their mother, the old farmer took Helen and William, the one now in her eighth, and the other, in his sixth year, into his own family. Helen had been taught by her mother, to read, to knit, and to sew some little. William could also read though imperfectly. As there was no school near the place, his sister and the woman of the house frequently gave him lessons, and in the course of a twelvemonth, he could read the Bible fluently. Here the two orphans had the benefit of a pious example ; and the sweetness of their tempers, and ready obedience, procured them the affection of every one in the

house. As thy grew up, William was employed in keeping his benefactor's cows, and Helen assisted in the dairy. During their leisure hours, they rambled together by the rushy brooks, and sunny hills; gathering here the wild thyme, and there the silky white down of the cannach: and never did they return home without visiting their mother's grave, covered now, by the pious care of the shepherds, with a smooth granite stone, on which they had spelt, in "uncouth letters," the name of the inhabitant below. A grey willow, whose roots were nourished by the passing streamlet, spread its sweet smelling leaves half way over the grave, and by the other side, bloomed the heath, rustling on the edge of the stone, while the breeze sighed over the moorland. Here would Helen kneel down, and pray with her little brother, that God would be their father, their guardian, and friend, and take them at length to himself, where they would be orphans no more—and here would she instruct her brother in the fear of the Lord, and tell him all that she remembered of their mother, while they lived in the little hut—and here, especially every Sabbath morning in the summer, early, while the dew yet sparkled on the wild flowers, sat the orphan pair. O how often did they sit on this grey stone, unseen by all but heaven! and

while the wild bee hummed its little note of gratitude, and sipped its sweet food from the bosom of the heather-bell, did they drink of the streams of life, which flow from the pure word of God. On Helen's soul at least, young as she was, the dawn of eternal day had already appeared. She prayed in faith—she trusted in her Saviour—she leaned on the Rock of Ages. She felt that her own heart was ever ready to go astray—she felt that she was naturally polluted and she kept her eye on the star of Bethlehem—and went daily to wash in the fountain that is ever open, for sin, and for uncleanness.

Helen was remarkable for tender-heartedness. The lamb forsaken, or bereaved of its mother, the crippled fowl, the dying sheep, received her ardent attention, and often her tear. She would frequently watch the falcon in chase of the lark, or the moss-chirper; and as the little bird, now descending, now mounting above its fell pursuer, struggled for life, she would exclaim, "O would it come to me!" and once she enjoyed the luxury of saving the little trembler in her bosom, while the disappointed falcon swam away on the wind, in search of some less fortunate songster of the desert. She would often too go out of her way, that she might not disturb the nest of the lapwing, the snipe, or the plover. And

when she happened, in thoughtful mood, to cast her eye down on the wild flower that seemed decaying, while all around was verdant and lively, she would bathe it with a tear, and say "We must all die like thee, drooping flower. The world will laugh and be gay, when we are gone, as the herbage that surrounds thy falling head. O that I may answer my end like thee! Thou hast grown up, spread thy bosom to the morning, shed thy fragrance around thee, looked lovely—very lovely, and thy duty is complete. O that I may so grow up, opening my heart to the Sun of Righteousness, casting around me a sweet saviour of piety, shining in the white robes of holiness, and falling at last, without a murmur, into the grave; secure that my soul shall have an everlasting place in the fount of life." There was one rather odd employment into which the tenderness of Helen's feelings often led her.

Whoever has travelled over the moorish districts of Scotland, must have observed those webs woven by a large grey spider. They are to be seen in thousands, suspended across the gulleys, and broken mosses, glittering in the morning dew. The insect generally fastens a single thread to a stump of heath, on each side of the gulley from the middle of which it weaves four or five other threads,

fixing them also to one side of the gulley. On these it spins a circular network, nine inches or a foot in diameter, in the midst of which it crouches, like death, in concealment, till the coming of the heedless fly.

In her idle hours, Helen would often take a bush of heath in her hand, scramble among the broken mosses, and sweep away hundreds of those frail toils, always letting the spider escape, but disabling it, for a time, for carrying on the work of destruction.

So far, young reader, is religion from destroying the finer feeling of our nature ; so far from contracting our sympathies, or souring our ordinary pleasures. Indeed, how is it possible, that the liker we become to our Father in heaven, who cares for all his works, the solitary flower of the desert, as well as the seraphim in glory, our regards for creation can be diminished ? Truly the more religious we are, whatever the mere sentimentalist may say, the more kindly will we look on all the works of God's hand. The flower of the field is pencilled by Jehovah ; and the good man looks on it with an eye of admiration. The lark is taught her song by the Almighty ; and the Christian listens to it with delight. The river spreads its bounties, and leads its meanderings, under the guidance of the God of Israel ; and the saint tastes its

waters, and gazes on its romantic banks, and devious course, with feelings of poetical rapture, and devotional gratitude.—The Christian feels, that he is heir of all things ; and he looks to them all, thinks of them all, and acts towards them all, as a son. There have been Christians, and perhaps some of them may still be found, who seem to despise the natural world, with all its beauty and grandeur. They turn away their ear from the music of the grove, as if God had not taught the songster ; they tread on the lily of the valley, as if God had not arrayed it with glory. But this is a spot in their character—a sin which the blood of Christ must wash out ; and far from being, as they would have us believe, a denying of themselves, dispositions such as theirs have often even caused the philosopher, and the sentimentalist, to load our holy religion with the charge of extinguishing the natural charities, and absorbing the finer sympathies of our soul. Imitate them not, young reader. God himself demands your warmest love ; his tender mercy in Christ, your primest gratitude. But let all the works of creation prove a mirror to your mind. Do the saints in glory—do the holy angels look on the moon and stars, walking the paths of the midnight sky, without rapture ? Do they see ocean lift up the voice of his waves, and roar to break up his ever

lasting prison-doors ; or the river roll down the massy wanderings of his strength ; or the mountain forest shake the locks of his majesty without exclaiming, Great and Marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty ; just and true are all thy ways, thou Creator of the ends of the earth ?

Helen had now finished her fourteenth, and William his twelfth year, when Mr. Hunter a gentleman who had been an acquaintance, and friend of their father, while in Glasgow, came to pay them a visit. His manners were kind and familiar—such as soon gain the confidence of the youthful mind. William, who was never so well contented with his situation as his sister, listened eagerly while Mr. Hunter talked of Glasgow, the hurry of its business, and the way of making money. Mr. Hunter pleased with William's natural capacity, and observing his dispositions, offered to take him along with him to Glasgow, and initiate him into the principles of the commercial concern, of which he was a partner himself. William accepted the proposal with eagerness ; the old farmer approved the more easily of his choice, as he knew Mr. Hunter to be a sober, industrious gentleman, and well in the world : and the views of future independence, and respectability to her brother, and his promises never

to forget religion, gained the consent of Helen.

It was a morning in Autumn when William set out with his new friend. And as the old shepherd, with Helen, accompanied them a mile or two, on their way to Glasgow, he addressed William shortly after this manner.

“You are now going away, my son,” for this was the kind appellation the old farmer always gave him, “you are going away from the quietness and sobriety of our sequestered glens. Vice and temptation will beset you on every side. But trust in God, and he will uphold you. Read your Bible; pray for direction to your father in heaven; attend as often as possible the preaching of the Gospel. Be obedient to your master, constant at your business, and obliging to all. And if God shall prosper you, beware of pride and vanity: your prosperity shall last the longer. Observe the heath on which we tread. It heeded not the first shower of spring; it put not forth its buds till the frosty nights were gone, and the steady heat of summer came in. And see, it is still green and vigorous; while the gaudy flower, which rose, and spread its painted leaves, at the first sunshine of the year, has already withered away, and no trace of it is seen on the mountains. Remember

this short advice, my William, and the God of your fathers be with you."

Helen held her brother by the hand, enforced the old man's instructions, and repeated to him their mother's last advice, with much tenderness and affection, "'Never forsake God, and he will never forsake you.' And O come to see us soon." The two orphans now embraced, and with tears in their eyes, bade Farewell. William took his way over the heath, towards Glasgow; and Helen, often looking back on her brother, for she loved him with the tenderness of a seraph, returned, with the old farmer, to her home.

William, on his arrival in Glasgow, was much amused with the busy scene. The houses, the streets, the carriages were all new to him. As new were the habits and manners of the inhabitants. But this natural pliancy of manner, and aptness to learn, soon assimilated his general character to his associates. Constant and vigilant at his business, he gained his master's favour and kind attention in return. He was taught writing, and accounts, and whatever might tend to accomplish a young man, designed for the activities of business.

During his first year's stay in Glasgow, the kind advices of his sister, and his old benefactor never left his memory. He read his Bible,

prayed in secret, and went to church on the hallowed day. When he heard the boy younger than himself, utter horrid oaths, and take the name of the Holy One in vain; or when he heard the tongue of licentiousness and scandal, his soul trembled within him. But vice is a dangerous neighbour. Like the apples of Gomorrah, how rotten soever within, it puts on a fair outside; or like the vampyre of America, while it sucks away the life-blood of piety, it soothes and flatters the repose of its victims. William's associates, who were mostly careless of religion, and some of them covertly addicted to the grosser vices, seemed cheerful, free, and generous: and often ridiculed his seriousness, and scrupulous observance of the Lord's day. In his master, William had no example of genuine religion. Mr. Hunter, as we have observed, was sober, vigilant in business, and knew well how to gain the world. But his creed was of the easy and accommodating kind. In these persecuting times, he shifted it, like too many of his cotemporaries, as best suited his personal safety, and worldly aggrandizement. His character was fair in the eyes of his neighbours; but the leprosy of sin was at work in the darkness of his heart. In his house, family worship was neglected: and his instructions to William were oftener how to manage

the fluctuations of trade, and distance his fellows in the pursuit of wealth, than how to avoid the snares of wickedness, and gain the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Thus removed from the kind instructions of his sister, and the old farmer, and exposed to the seducements of temptation, and vicious example, like the willow, from whose roots the stream turns away its waters, and on whose leaves came the blighting frosts, need we be surprised if the beauty of William's piety began to wither and decay? Now he would think of the gaiety of his companions, who seemed happy in their neglect of religion; now he would question the utility of so much attention to the well-being of his soul: and again the former admonitions of his friends awakened in his memory, and his conscience trembled. By degrees, however, he forgot his Bible, or read it heedlessly; went to sleep without committing himself to the care of his heavenly Father, and arose, in the morning, without thanking the God who had preserved him. The Sabbath, instead of being spent in the house of prayer, or in devotional meditation, was often profaned, in pleasure-walks, or in idle, and licentious conversation. Still would the parting advice of Helen come like a warning angel to his soul,

and stem for a moment the current of his misdoings. His heart beat with fear, when he thought that his sister might hear of his dishonouring the Sabbath, or neglecting his devotions.

And had he no fear of God? Will you, young reader, stand in awe of your fellow-men? Will you tremble at the rebuke of the world? Yes, you would grieve to wound the heart of your earthly benefactor. You will stand pale before the offended laws of your country. Shame will blush on your face, when you violate the niceness of the rules and customs of fashion. You will bow to the great ones of the earth; and look with alarm when the hand of man's justice lifts the sword against you. The little tyrant, who couches in the gloominess of his barricaded fastnesses, although but a worm of God's footstool, can make you tremble; and will you not fear God, who can cast both soul and body into hell fire? Will you fear to grieve your earthly benefactors, and will you have no reverence to your Father in heaven? Will ye tremble to offend the laws of man, and blush to be taken in an unfashionable suit of apparel; and wil. ye trample under foot the laws and the statutes of the God of hosts, and will ye not blush when he sees you stript of the white robes of innocence, and refusing to put on the garments

that are worn in the courts of heaven. Surely this is folly.

One thing I shall observe here, which may be useful to parents, should this little piece happen to fall into any of their hands.

Among the injunctions which the old farmer gave William, you remember one was, that he should attend the preaching of the gospel. But the good old man forgot to specify what minister of religion he should hear. Indeed, in those days when the faithful servants of God were mostly driven from their flocks by persecution, it was not easy to find, even in such a place as Glasgow, a minister who would declare the whole counsel of God. Those whom the iniquitous laws of the time permitted to appear in the pulpits, were dumb dogs that could not bark: they prophesied lies, and announced to their slumbering congregations, peace, peace, when there was no peace.

Such was the priest under whose ministry Mr. Hunter had placed himself, and William attended the same church. Here he heard little of the original depravity of man—of his natural hatred to God, and all that is holy. Little of the inflexibility of God's justice, and of his jealous, and immutable regard to the minutest requirement of his moral law. He was indeed told, that he was a sinner, and needed to be made holy, and just, and good

before he could see God. He was enjoined to do good, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with his God; to be kind and charitable to all, and to keep God's commandments, as far as frail human nature would permit. He was also reminded, that after all his pious endeavours, much would be amiss; but, that God was a God of mercy, and delighted to forgive the repenting sinner. But alas! he heard little of the great atonement—of God's mercy flowing to sinners, only through him—of the quickening influences of the Holy Spirit—of man putting away from his trust, all his own works, and relying for salvation, solely on the merits and propitiatory death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The minister who concealed thus the essence of preaching, was called a minister of the gospel; but oh! how unlike a minister of the gospel of Christ! Under him, William's conscience was flattered, he became more pleased with himself, and was glad to hear that he might expect heaven at last with so little expense to his natural desires and propensities. Thus, one who called himself, and whom the world called, a servant of God, joined with William's companions, and the deceitfulness of his own heart, in endeavouring the ruin of his soul.

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the guidance of youth, to place them under a true minister of the gospel of the grace of God—an able and a faithful minister of the New Testament. We are sorry to have cause to say, that our pulpits are not yet wholly cleared of false prophets. Let parents, and guardians, therefore, beware. Let them not make the omission of the old farmer. Who knows how much William's pious resolutions might have been strengthened, and his back-sliding prevented, by the weekly ministrations of a zealous, heart-searching, faithful minister of the gospel of Christ? The state of the church, as we have hinted, formed some palliation for the conduct of the old farmer. But the guardians of youth, can have now no such excuse. Blessed be God, faithful ministers of religion may now be found in every part of the kingdom.

While William was thus unknown to his friends, putting away from him the fear of the Lord, Helen, far retired from these busy scenes, was training her soul to virtue, and assimilating her nature to those "who walk with God, high in salvation, and the climes of bliss." The mercy and holiness of God, as manifested in the sacrifice of his Son, was the theme of her sweet and daily contemplation—she did good, and loved mercy, and walked humbly with her God; but she looked to Jesus

Christ alone, as the author, and finisher of her faith ; as the great and only means of her justification with God ; and to the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, for those renewing and sanctifying influences which could alone prepare her soul for an inheritance among the saints in light. Helen had often fled from the violence of persecution ; and, young, inoffensive, and meek as she was, suffered oftener than once from its cruelty. One time, in particular, a lighted match was placed between her fingers, by a soldier, to extort from her the discovery of her old guardian. Helen knew if the old man was taken, immediate death would be his lot ; for he had not only been intercommuned himself, but his house was a noted sheltering place, for the scattered flock of Christ. The match burned between her fingers ; but Helen, with a look that might have softened the heart of the wolf, and a voice that might have wrung a tear from the eye of the tiger, said to her tormentor, that she could not discover the old man, for he was to her as a father. The oaths, and menaces of the soldier, made her tremble ; but looking to heaven for strength, she endured the torture ; and after her hand had been severely burned, the cruel dragoon struck her tender neck with the back of his sword and went off

cursing her obstinacy, as he called her pious and faithful firmness.

Meanwhile the arm of persecution was beginning to weary in the slaughter. The instruments of torture, the iron boot, and the thumbkin, were nearly laid aside in Scotland, and the children of God were less hunted by the hounds of oppression. Helen neglected not the kind interference of providence. Every sabbath she was present in the house of God, where she sat with peculiar delight. Every morning of the hallowed day, she visited the solitary grave of her mother, reading her Bible, and holding communion with the upper world.

To the affairs of the house Helen was ever attentive; and her modesty, sensibility, and piety, made her the favourite of the sequestered few with whom she lived. The troublous aspect of the times, and the severe bereavements she had suffered, had thrown a seriousness and sobriety over her character, rather disproportioned to her years. But she knew nothing of moroseness, or melancholy. The fear of heaven dwelt in her bosom: the smile of content beamed in her face. She always took a ready part in the simple and innocent amusements of her rustic companions. Of music she was peculiarly fond. Often would she sit on the grassy seat, by the house side

and listen to the evening song of the shepherd boy, winding down the glen from his laired flock. And often in the winter evening, the peat burning on the hearth, and the wheel humming in the corner, would the old farmer lay the stocking, at which he knitted, on his knee, and give his ear to Helen, while she sung the sweet melodies of Scotland.

Truly, young reader, religion is no dreary thing. Its light casts a ray of cheerfulness over all the character. It is the Christian who possesses the merry heart. He is on his way to his Father's house; and why should he be fretted or morose? He sees no darkness on the countenance of heaven; and why should his face gather blackness? He knows that no frown rests on the face of his reconciled Father; and why should he offer him monastic sullenness?

CHAPTER IV.

—————Horror and doubt distract
His troubled thoughts; and from the bottom stir
The hell within him. * *

—————Now conscience waits despair
That slumbered; wakes the bitter memory
Of what he was, what is, and what must be
Worse; of worse deeds, worse sufferings must endure
Milton.

THREE years and some months had now elapsed since William went to business in Glasgow. He had hitherto been prevented visiting his sister, chiefly by the tumult and danger of the times. But the bright morning of the Revolution had now driven away from our land the dark fiend of persecution. The laws were respected; the country was eased of oppression; and the persons and property of men safe from violence.

It was on a frosty morning of January that William left Glasgow, to pay a visit to Helen and the old farmer. As he crossed the Clyde, the sun looked cold and red through the smoky atmosphere of the town. But as he left the

city behind him, the fields, and the sky brightened in the splendid, though short gaze of the winter day. The bird chirped on the brown and leafless hedge-row, and the morning maid carried her pail from the well. Amusing himself with the objects around him, William crossed the cultivated parts of Renfrewshire, and drew near to the moorlands. He now past a small stream that washed the north border of the parish of Eaglesham. This brook, called the Erne, as the swains on its banks say, from a species of the eagle of that name, which lodged here, while Scotland was yet covered with woods, where William crossed it, leads its gentle waters secluded among grassy hills, and little green holms, on which grow in their seasons the primrose, the fern, the wild daisy, and the violet. As he ascended the south bank, he noticed a small oval excavation, called from its appearance, the *Chamber's Braes*. In this sequestered hollow, during the hot day of persecution, the neighbouring swains, whose offspring still possess the ground, often met to hear the joyful sound. Here the psalm often rose on the breeze of the hallowed morning—here the holy man of God lifted up the desires of his people to the ear of the Eternal—and hither the blessing descended from between the cherubim.

Proceeding on his way, he gained, an hour

after mid-day, the summit of Balagich, a hill about eleven miles south of Glasgow, which in this place forms the boundary between the heathy sheep grounds to the south, and the cultivated districts that slope gently down to the river Clyde on the north. Tired with travelling, here he sat down on some old grey stones, piled together by the shepherds, and threw his eyes over the romantic scenery.

To the east rose Tinto, watching the youthful ramblings of the Clyde ; and a little to the north and farther in the distance, Pentland hills, and Arthur's seat, whence the morning sun looks down on the towers of Edinburgh. Beneath him, passing in his course the spires of Glasgow, dimly seen in the smoke, and leaving the eye at the rock of Dumbarton castle, the ancient strength of Scotland, the Clyde watered his fertile valley, surmounted on the north by the fells of Campsie, and the wild mountains of the western highlands. Benledi or Hill of God, where our pagan forefathers worshipped their unknown gods muffled its spiry top in the clouds. Benlomond from whose shoulders the unsubdued sons of freedom rushed down on the Roman invader, was clothed in his saintly robes of snow ; and the garments of the mist leaned on his head. Shooting up far to the west were the rocky hills of Arron on whose rugged tops the

spirit of the storm gathers the rain, and nurses the infant tempest. Round the rock of Ailsa, hovering in the wave, like the guardian angel of the Frith, rolled the wintry billows of the Atlantic, and straggling along its shores stood Saltcoat, Irvin, and Ayr, looking up from the setting sun on the plentiful districts of Carrick, Coil, and Cunningham, scattered with villages and farm houses, and guarded in the distance by the grassy hills of Galloway, from which the sun gazes on the shepherd at mid-day. Rising out of the brown level waste to the south, was the little round elevation of Loudon-hill, towards which William now directed his course.

Silence reigned on the desert, save when it was broken by the brown cock calling his mate, the bleating of sheep, or the whistle of the shepherd, who seemed in more than ordinary solicitude, to gather his flocks. His care was not unnecessary. Although William feared no danger, the shepherds, who knew well, the face of the heavens, saw an approaching tempest. The sun veiled his face—a heavy gray fog closed over the sky—the breeze had left the heath—the little water-falls were heard at a distance—and a kind of general sighing prevailed over nature.

William had proceeded through gulleys, and moor-streams. a few miles only, when the

storm overtook him. It was sudden, and furious. The snow descended so rapidly and closely, that he saw not whither he went; and the four winds seemed to contend around his head which of them should drive the snow before. Young and vigorous, he struggled a while against the fierceness of the tempest. But every moment in danger of falling into some bog, or water runnel, now choked up with the snow, and not knowing what way to hold for safety, he at length stood still leaning on a hillock of heath. The tempest grew still more violent: and he began to fear for his life. No hope of assistance or of outliving the storm where he was, appeared. Nothing was heard on the waste, but the roaring of the wind; and the driving snow, that beat against him, and blinding his eyes, threatened to smother him outright.

It was then that William remembered, that he had profaned the Sabbaths, forgotten his Bible, and neglected prayer. His conscience rose within him, as the storm increased without. The kind instructions of Helen rushed on his mind. And "O shall I never see her again;" was the exclamation of his heart. "Deliver me, O Lord, this time; and I will no more forget thy holy day, and religion again." Struggling thus with the tempest, and the fears of death, which, young as he was, he



It found its master, and brought him where William lay.
Helen of the Glen.

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had already made terrible by his forgetfulness of Him who has conquered death, he shrunk down to the ground benumbed, and hopeless. The storm had now rather abated; but the darkness of night was spreading over the moor, and William, unable to rise, or stir himself, felt the piercing frost rapidly fastening on the functions of life. Another hour, and the wheel at the cistern would have stood still for ever. But his deliverer was at hand.

A shepherd's dog approached him, looked earnestly in his face, and immediately ran off. William tried to speak to it; but his tongue refused to obey. The dog needed no intreaty. It found its master, and brought him where William lay. The shepherd raised him up; from his bosom took a bottle of sweet milk which he carried for his own refreshment, and giving him the warm milk in small quantities, succeeded in restoring him to proper animation, and to a partial use of his limbs. The kind peasant threw his own plaid round William's shoulders, and supported him on his arm to his master's house, a lonely hut situated in the midst of the moor about a mile from the spot where he had fallen down overcome by the storm. In this humble dwelling, which was a noted rendezvous of the people of God in the time of persecution, he received the kindest attention. The old man of the

house, who had often fled before the cruel and insolent soldiers, like the primitive Christians, washed his feet with his own hands; one of his daughters wiped the snow from William's clothes and hair; another prepared him something to eat; while their mother warmed blankets for him before the fire. The old man thanked God for making his servant and his house the means of saving a fellow creature, and William went to bed, and fell fast asleep, remembering the shepherd's dog, more than the providence of God that had sent it to deliver him.

In the morning, William was roused from sleep by a deep groan, which proceeded from a bed in the same apartment. The old man, who knitted stockings by the fire, came to William's bedside, and told him not to be alarmed. "It is an old soldier," continued he, "who lies there." He was brought in hither two or three days ago. He has been seized with a violent fever, and I fear he will not hear many hours told. His name, added the old man, "is Wrathburn, well known in the time of the last persecution, for the inflexible cruelty; and especially for his cold-blooded murder of the widow of Cleugh-head."

At the name of Wrathburn and the widow of Cleugh-head, William started, and his face changed colour. "What alarms you," said

the old man, "the soldier can hurt no one now." "The widow of Cleugh-head was my mother," replied William, "and I never hear the name of her murderer without trembling. Discover me not to him," continued he, "it will make his last moments bitter." "They are bitter enough even now," said the old man "he refuses to be comforted."

Although the reader already knows something of Wrathburn, it will be necessary here to make a short pause in the narrative, and explain how he was brought into the present situation.

The licentiousness and prodigality of the reign of Charles II. spread from the court, and over almost every class of men in the kingdom. The soldiers especially, who were the instruments of persecution in Scotland, imitated their master in every species of riot and drunkenness. Accustomed to plunder and massacre the recusants, or people of God, at pleasure, they totally lost every habit of temperance, and every feeling of humanity. The consequence was, that, when disease or old age disabled them for service, deprived of the means, but not the propensities of dissipation they were reduced to poverty and wretchedness. And hundreds of them, forgotten by the masters whose cruelty they had served, wandered about, especially after the persecu

tion, begging their bread, among those very peasants whose lives they had pursued, whose houses they had plundered, and whose relations they had murdered. Of this sort was Wrathburn ; so intrepid in cruelty, so inflexible to supplication, that Claverhouse the bitterest of all persecutors, used to send him on all his bloody errands, where his soldiers were most apt to be turned aside from his orders, by the courage of the peasants, or the tears of women and children. We have already seen one act of his stubborn cruelty, in the murder of Mrs. Thomson. This was certainly the most abominable deed of his life ; but there was scarcely a family in the moorish districts of the shires of Lanark and Ayr, that could not bear witness against him for some act of torture, or insolent violence. Disabled at last in his sword arm, by a wound received from the faithful sabre of Hackston, at Bothwell Bridge, and worn out with old age, and disease, he had now begged his bread for several years. He had been found, overcome with hunger and fatigue, in the midst of the moors, by the same shepherd who saved William ; and now he lay fevered, and on the brink of death, as the old man described him.

As the snow-storm had been succeeded by a rapid thaw, to leave the hut that day was impossible ; William had therefore an oppor

tunity of seeing the end of this man. He approached the bedside. The aspect of the old sinner was indeed terrible. Down from his projecting cheek bones, hung the skin in withered foldings that had once been filled with flesh—his head was bald—his beard was long and of a dirty gray—a mouldering stump or two appeared in his mouth, that gaped widely for breath—the violence of the distemper raised up his eye-balls now and then, glaring from their large hollow sockets, the fiery darkness of despair. Hell, and everlasting wrath took hold of his imagination: and he would often cry out furiously, “Cut them down—cut them down to the last. The widow of Cleugh-head—she pursues me—see her daughter swoons by her corpse—that groan was her last—it drives me to perdition.—No mercy, no mercy.”

In the short intervals of the fever, he would endeavour to sit up on his bed. With his left arm he tried to support his head: but it was too heavy—the feeble prop fell down; and his right arm lay shrunk and withered by his side. It was then that the good old man placed his shoulder below the head of the dying wretch, pleaded with God for him, and laboured to administer comfort.

“God’s mercy is infinite,” said the old man, ‘your sin in disbelieving the all-sufficiency of

his grace, is greater than that of your most wicked actions. Remember what the Bible says; "The Lord is slow to anger, and abundant in mercy. 'Come let us reason together,' says the voice of his infinite goodness, 'though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Jesus Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Whosoever believeth in him, however guilty he may have been, shall not perish, but have everlasting life. The blood of the Redeemer cleanseth from all sin.' O turn yourself to prayer, ere it be too late. God hath ever an open ear to those who call on him in distress."

♦"No, no," with a voice of fury and despair, cried the hopeless sinner; "I never prayed, and God will not hear me now. I read not that Bible of which you speak—I despised that book, and them who read it. I will not pray—the blood of murder is on my hands—the gates of heaven are shut against me—the sword of God's vengeance hath gone into my heart—the eternal fire burns in my soul—pray not for me—talk not of mercy—O for utter annihilation!—endless torment is on me—leave me—the widow of Clengh-head pursues me—that was the shriek of her daughter."

O! how dreadful were the agonies of his soul! Conscience that had been long disre-

garded, now put on the terrors of eternal death; and truly its voice was heard. The bed on which he lay, shook with furious convulsions of his body. The fever again took away his senses—and nothing but heavy groans was heard. Again a minute of ease returned, and the old man tried yet again to administer some spiritual relief.

“Doubt not,” said he, “of God’s mercy; he wishes not that you should perish. Remember the thief who was saved on the cross, and went to Paradise. Remember Paul, who was the most inveterate of persecutors, and yet he found mercy. Try, O try to pray! God may hear you.”

“Away with mercy,” cried the frantic wretch; “it is perdition to my soul. Hell calls for me—the devil drags me away—the wrath of God is on me—the widow of the Cleugh-head pursues me—that was the shriek of her orphan daughter—that is her blood on my hands—hell cannot burn it off!”

Again the strong disease fastened firmer upon him—the mighty strength of the king of terrors was in the pang. The withered stump of the right arm made a convulsive motion, as if to search for the sword; again it fell back—another lurid gleam flashed from his hollow eye—no bow appeared on the cloud of eternal darkness—a deep groan shook his

body—it lay still for ever—and his soul was summoned away to that bar whence there is no appeal!

Surely, O man, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God! This man showed no mercy; he exceeded even the cruelty of his commission. The tears and supplications of humble widowhood; the shriekings and swoonings of fatherless childhood melted not the cruelty of his heart—and how could he expect to find mercy in the hour of need! He hated God, and Christ, and all that is holy—and where could he find a stay, how could he see a guiding star in the valley of thick darkness? He despised the great Captain of salvation—and how could he meet in battle with the king of terrors. Truly “the fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him. Terrors take hold on him, as waters; a tempest stealeth him away in the night. The east wind carrieth him away, and he departeth, and as a storm hurleth him out of his place. For God shall cast upon him, and not spare; he would fain flee out of his hand. Men shall clap their hands at him, and shall hiss him out of his place.

CHAPTER V.

. With countenance as mild
As Mercy looking on Repentance' tear ;
Her eye of purity now darted up
To God's eternal throne, now humbly bent
Upon herself ; and weeping down her cheek
A tear, pure as the dews that fall in heaven.

Anna.

NIGHT had again shrouded all in darkness ; and it was a night of sadness and trembling in the family of the moor. The horrible expressions of the dying wretch were still in their ears ; they still saw his last looks of despair ; his last convulsions were still in their memories ; his lifeless corpse lay on the bed, and the dark blast of winter moaned over the waste. The old man exhorted them to put their trust in God ; and prayed that the scene they had witnessed might be blessed for their improvement.

William now went to bed ; but sleep refused to visit him. He thought still of th last looks and words of Wrathburn. He re

solved, and resolved again, never to forget religion. Was it possible that his end might be like this man's? If he forsook God now might not God forsake him in the hour of desolation? "Guide my feet, O God! in the path of the just, that my end may be like his," was the whisper of his fears—and only of his fears.

As soon as morning appeared, William, glad to quit the present scene, set forward for his sister's. Travelling was extremely difficult. The snow had been mostly dissolved; but the streams were swollen, and the swampy grounds in many places covered with water. Resting himself on a gentle height, about three miles from the house he had left, he observed, coming out from it, five or six men. They drove a horse, with a car; and seemed to hold towards a hamlet, situated at the distance of six or seven miles.

It was the funeral of Wrathburn. The very men whom he had often chased with the sword, and whose relations he had murdered, and whose memories many now ridicule, were doing him the last office of humanity. Through fens, and bogs, and over rills, they carried him; and in a corner of the village church-yard, at a small distance from the ordinary place of graves, laid him down in the

narrow house, "far from the ashes of his fathers."

Meanwhile, William, now skipping from hillock to hillock, and now leaping the moor-runnels, made towards the habitation of Helen. She had been watching him making his way over the rough broken mosses, like a vessel holding for a difficult port: and, although his appearance was considerably altered, she recognised him at a small distance from the house, ran out with all her usual tenderness, and embraced him, and led him into the dwelling of the honest farmer. The evening was spent in kind inquiries, and kind answers. Helen related, with beautiful simplicity, any curious or entertaining incident, that had happened in the neighbourhood since William's departure; and William seemed unreserved in telling her and the old man whatever had happened to him in Glasgow; and not a word dropt from him that could give them the least intimation of his declining piety. The story of Wrathburn made a deep impression on the whole family: and "O!" said Helen, the blood leaving her cheek, and the tear starting in her eye, "was there no hope? Did he die uttering those horrid words? Did you not pray for him, William? I am sure my mother forgave him. Why did

he not seek the mercy of God? O! did he die unforgiven?"

Helen perceiving no marks of decline in his religion, was extremely pleased with her brother. William was taller; his glossy jet locks curled plentifully on his healthy cheeks, which had now assumed that smoothness and richness of colouring which precedes manhood; his black eye rolled more freely; his dress was neater; he spoke better; and his whole appearance was more graceful.

Nor had Helen grown up in the desert an unlovely flower. Although, seeing few but the old shepherd, and his servants, (for his wife had now been dead for some time, and he had no children,) her native sweetness of temper, her contentment, her sobriety of thought, gave an expression, and a dignity to her countenance, superior to her situation in life. Her form was handsome: the loveliness and vigour of seventeen, imparted animation to every feature; a profusion of sunny ringlets shaded her fair neck, and played on her shoulders; and her soft blue eye beamed with beauty.

Although William was by no means deficient in natural talent and feeling; in all that concerned religion, Helen was far his superior. Her understanding, illuminated by the divine truths of the Bible; her imagina-

tion enlarged by the boldness of its poetry ; and her heart warmed by the pathos of its piety, she felt and spoke of divine things, in a style much above her years. Seldom was she drawn into lengthened conversation on these subjects ; but when the taste, or interest of her associates required it, having fully before her mind the awful impression of eternal concerns, she entered into religious converse, with an eloquence, a warmth, and an energy, which surprised, and often deeply impressed those with whom she conversed.

Now gazing on one another, now talking of their days of childhood, and now of their future prospects, the two orphans spent that evening, and the following day, the wetness of which had kept them within doors, till sunset ; and now they walked out to visit their mother's grave.

"Does the lamb go with us," said William ; noticing one that skipped at Helen's side. "It is a foster lamb ;" said Helen, "it lost its mother, and I have brought it up in the house. It follows me every where ; I have to shut it up when I go to church. Poor thing ! I love its white face. It will go along with us ; often has it accompanied me to my mother's grave."

The wind was hushed on the mountain ; the stream purled down its glen ; in the wa-

ter-spots, over the brown waste, glittered the lamps of heaven ; the vesper star looked solitary from its hermitage in the west ; up the east, rejoicing in the midst of her constellations, rode the moon ; and the light cloud, passing at intervals over her face, threw its wavy shadow on the heath.

The two orphans now approached the grave of their mother. The gay willow dropt on the stone the tears of evening. William stooped down and read the name. Helen kneeled on the heath by its side ; the lamb looked up in her face ; she pressed one hand to her breast, lifted the other up to heaven, turned her blue eye to the skies, and besought the blessing, even life that shall never end, for her brother and herself. "Father in heaven ! guide our feet in the paths of wisdom ; make us white and clean in the blood of the Lamb, that our dwelling place may be in the house of God for ever."

The two orphans now shed the tear of natural affection, on their mother's grave. Nor did they forget that their father's dust mouldered in a distant land. The sigh that heaved their breasts for the cruel death of their mother, deepened as they recollected, that their father had gone before her. "Let us follow their steps," said Helen to her brother as they returned home, "let us follow their

steps, and we shall see them in heaven. Remember, William, our mother's dying advice, Never forsake God, and he will never forsake you."

During William's stay with his sister, they were often engaged in cheerful talk, and innocent amusement. But we mean to confine the narration here chiefly to their private religious conversation.

Before the old farmer, William always demeaned himself with the strictest propriety; but sometimes he betrayed a levity and a carelessness when Helen spoke of religion, and its duties, which alarmed her, lest the contagion of bad example had been sapping the roots of his piety. Ever mindful of her mother's wish, that she should instruct and warn William; and ever anxious herself for the welfare of his soul, she urged him to tell her all that he felt and thought of religious concerns. However reluctant William might have been to speak plainly on these subjects to any other, he could not resist the entreaties of his sister.

One day, while sitting in the house alone, the pious sister pressing her brother to speak to her just as he thought, the following conversation ensued; William disclosing the principles which he had learned from his companions in Glasgow, and Helen endeavouring

to root them out of his mind, chiefly by the pure words of inspiration.

“Some attention to religion, sister,” said William, “is surely very necessary. But I see some of my companions, as cheerful and happy as I, who trouble themselves little about it. They attend to their business, and are getting on in the world; and yet they don’t seem to be always reading their Bible. I even hear them swear, and take the name of God in vain; and yet they are gay and prosperous.”

“And is it not God, dear William, who gives them health and prosperity;” said Helen, gazing on William’s face. O how did she gaze when she heard these expressions! “It is from God we receive all our blessings. In him we live, and move, and have our being. All that is beautiful, or grand, or useful in nature: all our intellectual enjoyments; and all that soothes and endears in acquaintance, or friendship, come from our God. Is it any but God who giveth us the former and the latter rain, and scatters the dews of heaven on the grassy bosom of the earth? Is it any but our Father in heaven, who loads the fields of autumn, and crowns the hopes of the husbandman? He spreads the table of plenty, and bids all that live eat their fill. He giveth seed to the sower, and bread to the eater. He

crowneſh the year with his goodneſs, and his paths drop fatneſs. They drop upon the paſtures of the wilderneſs; and the little hills rejoice on every ſide. The paſtures are clothed with flocks; the vallies alſo are covered with corn. They ſhout for joy, they alſo ſing. Does God do all this for us, dear William, and ſhall we not fear him with a holy fear?"

"And," continued ſhe, her eye kindling with gratitude to God, and her voice ſoftening in compaſſion for William, "and has our gracious Father done no more than this for his children? Yes, he hath done more—infinutely more. When we, by the tranſgreſſions of his law, and by our attachment to ſin, had made ourſelves his enemies, and the enemies of all that is holy, and juſt and good—when we had thus expoſed ourſelves to his wrath and curſe, to all manner of ſuffering in time, and to inconceivable puniſhment in eternity, the gracious voice of his mercy was heard, ſaying, 'Deliver from going down to the pit, for I have found a ranſom.' And what was this ranſom? His own Son, who is himſelf the Almighty God, left the glories of heaven, aſſumed our nature, and by his obedience in our room, ſatiſfied the law of God, which we had violated; and by his death in our ſtead, delivered us from that eternal death to which we were expoſed. And how did we receive this

Messenger of peace and love—this SAVIOUR of a self-ruined world! Did we welcome his coming as all our salvation, and all our desire? Ah no! He was received with reviling, and reproach; yet he turned not away his love from us. He who was the brightness of his Father's glory, made himself of no reputation, girt himself like a servant, went about doing good, preaching peace, binding up the broken-hearted, and submitting to every privation, and trying every endearment, to win us to himself, and save us from the consequences of our guilt. Nor was this the end of his love. The Son of God bore our sins, in his body, on the tree; suffered the wrath of God for our sake; and on the hill of Calvary, bowed his head and gave up the ghost. On the third day, he rose again, and ascended up into heaven; where, in the presence of his Father, he pleads our cause; whence he sends the Comforter to purify our hearts, to cheer and support us through the trials of life; and where he is preparing mansions to receive us, that where he is, there we may be also—holding communion with our God for ever and ever. Hath God done all this for us, William, and shall we not love him? Hath Jesus Christ redeemed us by his own blood, and shall we not fear to offend him?

William, although much moved with this

address to his feelings of gratitude, continued thus; "Dear sister, we should certainly be grateful to him of whom we held so much. But I have heard my companions say, that God is all merciful—he will not punish us for our frailties."

"O William," resumed Helen, "that is the fairest lure that vice spreads to entice its prey. God is indeed all merciful to them who believe in his Son. Jesus Christ died for their sins, and rose again for their justification. His justice has, therefore, no claims against them. They are bought with a price. They are dear to him as the apple of his eye. They are his own children—and every dispensation they meet with, is the dispensation of a Father full of mercy. He hath no pleasure in the death even of the wicked. And he is saying to them, "let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, for he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Truly God is long-suffering, and slow to wrath. But he will forget to be gracious; he will ease himself of his adversaries; he will by no means clear the guilty; he will at last rise from his place, and scatter his enemies. And O it will be a terrible day for the wicked man, when God's mercy leaves him for ever!"

Again William tried to find refuge from the eloquence which Helen drew from the word of God. "The Almighty," said he "will perhaps not punish so severely as he has said. He will perhaps relent at last."

"Dear brother," said Helen, weeping, when she heard William speak in this manner, "Dear brother, you cannot think so. O where is your security for so frail a reliance! Hath God ever failed of his word? 'The mountains may depart, and the hills be removed out of their place; but the word of our God abideth for ever. He is the fountain of truth.' The words of the Lord are pure words. He knows the end from the beginning; and hath no need to change his purpose. He will not be more merciful at the end of time, than he was when the morning stars first sang together. His justice, and power, and truth, and holiness, stand pledged for the fulfilment of what he hath spoken. He hath sworn by Himself, that every word which proceeds from his mouth shall be fulfilled. Seek in the book of the Lord, and see if any of his purposes hath failed. The sentence of death was pronounced against Adam, if he disobeyed his Maker; and did it not take its effect? The sword of justice turned in between man, and the tree of life. Briers and thorns came up on the earth, and death was turned loose on mankind. And is

not the curse still cleaving to our rebellious race? The careworn countenance, the feeble knees, the pale visage of disease, can tell if God be faithful. The grave can tell if it has been defrauded of its prey. Has not death swept away generation after generation, and made the world a burying-place? Will the multitudes of those who perished in the deluge, bear witness against God's faithfulness? Will the ashes of Tyre and Jerusalem, or the lake of Sodom and Gomorrah, speak against his veracity? Or will the apostate spirits, and the departed souls of the wicked, bring us the tidings that his wrath is exhausted, and his decrees revoked?"

"But God has not been faithful to punish only," continued the earnest pleader, her face brightening as she beheld the tender mercies of God present in her mind, "He has been, and is faithful, and mighty to save. Since mercy placed the bow in the clouds, hath any one seen the waters come over the mountains, and smite every living thing with a curse. Or hath any one observed seed-time and harvest; and cold and heat; and summer and winter; and day and night cease from the earth? 'Hath he spoken it, and shall he not do it? Hath he said it, and shall he not bring it to pass?' The Son of God will not say that the Father is not true. In Eden, the voice of

God's truth and mercy was heard saying, that 'the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent.' This was the most expressive promise that God ever gave to man. Yet no jot of it hath failed. The veil of the temple rent in twain—the earth shook and trembled—the sun shrouded himself in darkness; but the purpose of God stood fast. The Saviour laid down his life, cast the serpent into everlasting chains, and secured the redemption of man. Hath God done this to accomplish his sayings; and shall he not give effect to his threatenings against those who fear him not, and trample on the blood of his Son? Trust not, William, trust not, my dear brother, to refuges of lies. Remember the death-bed scene you have lately witnessed—remember your mother's last advice—remember the goodness and wrath of God: and O think of the ingratitude, and danger of offending him!"

CHAPTER V

Thrice happy they ! that enter now the court
Heaven opens in their bosoms. But how rare !
Ah me ! that magnanimity, how rare !
What hero like the man who stands himself,
Who dares to meet his naked heart alone :
Who hears, intrepid, the full charge it brings,
Resolved to silence future murmurs there ?
The coward flies, and flying is undone !

Young.

By those addresses, recorded in the preceding chapter, which were more congenial to Helen's habits of thinking, and better fitted to touch the heart of her brother, than abstract argumentation, his objections to strict piety were silenced, at least for the present. William seemed to admit the claims of religion to his careful observance, and promised to give his ear no more to such misrepresentations of the immutable character of God. Helen glanced a look of thankfulness to heaven embraced her brother, and shed on his breast a tear of joy.

From the good old farmer William received

many kind advices ; one only of which I shall record here.

“Be faithful to your Father in heaven,” said the pious old man, “so you shall be happy. Be forgetful of his commandments, so you shall be miserable. You have seen a child set off confidently to catch the wild fowl that sat on the neighbouring hillock : you smiled at the simplicity of the little one ; much more simple is he who thinks to gather happiness from the frailties of earth. You have heard of a man chasing a shadow, or the fable phantom of night ; you then heard of one pursuing happiness among the frailties of earth. You have read of those false reflected waters, to which the thirsty traveller in the sandy deserts of the east hastens to drink, but finds them gone ; you then heard of one making haste to draw happiness out of the frailties of earth. You have seen the wild fire dancing on the marsh : it was beautiful ; but you could not lay hold of it. You have heard the echo of the glen : her voice was sweet ; but you could not embrace her. You have observed the evening star ; it was exceedingly bright ; but you could not reach it where you stood. Neither, my son, shalt thou encompass true happiness, except the peace of God dwell in thy heart. This happiness you may attain : but religion is the only guide, that can keep

your feet in the upward road, and direct your eye to her habitation. Take hold of her hand, William, and she will conduct you to happiness."

At William's second departure for Glasgow, Helen shortly addressed him. "Your companions, dear, William, seek the honour and preferment of this world: but O remember how frail they are. They, fearless of God may flourish for a while. Their spring may be green, their summer vigorous, and their autumn peaceful. But the dark winter comes: and all our pride, our vanity, and wealth, and honour, and earthly alliance, like the withered leaves of the grove, shall be driven away before its first blast. But religion shall outlive the withering breath: and, transplanted at last to a warmer soil, and kinder skies, she shall strike her roots by the river of life, grow up under the everlasting smile of God's countenance, bearing on her immortal branches all our pious friendships, and all our hallowed attachments."

For some time after William's return to Glasgow, his narrow escape from perishing in the moor, the old soldier's awful death, and the pious advice and instructions of Helen, and the old farmer, made a deep impression on his mind. He respected the Sabbath, read his Bible, and remembered the duty of prayer.

He determined to persevere, in duty, and defy the temptations of vice. But his trust was too much in an arm of flesh. A ray from heaven had not yet discovered to him the deceitfulness of his own heart.

With the enticements, the ridicule, and the sophistical reasonings of his vicious companions he was again assailed. He now wanted the natural timidity and bashfulness which scared him awhile, at his first coming to town, from the deformity of wickedness. Vice knew the passes to his heart; and as the second attack is almost always more feebly resisted than the first, it soon brought him into captivity. Of his character in the eyes of men, he was now, indeed, more careful than formerly. He could now see how necessary a fair name was to his worldly interest; and he took some means to preserve it. He mingled not oaths with the language of his ordinary business; he laughed not at religion before the serious; and he attended church, what is termed, regularly; that is, on the fore or afternoon of every Sabbath. To his business he was generally attentive; and his natural shrewdness and observation never suffered an opportunity in trade, as far as he was concerned, to escape unimproved. He seemed indeed, in the eye of the world, and perhaps its eye saw the truth in this instance,

to be following the very footsteps of his respectable master ; and Mr. Hunter loved and cherished him as a hopeful and enterprising son of commerce. Thus William stood before the world. But we must bring him to another examination : we must take a view of him in the privacy of chosen companionship.

It is a fact, that those who have been disciplined in the strictest rules of virtue, if they are once enticed away from its paths, become its bitterest enemies, and the foremost abettors of vice. They have been servants to religion ; and they must deny it thrice, ere their companions believe them—they know its defences, and where it is most assailable, and they can direct the attack more skillfully, and more effectually against it. Their conscience is more severe and more watchful ; and it requires a deeper draught of iniquity to silence its reproaches, and lay it asleep.

It was so with William. His talents were superior to those of any of his associates ; and in the seclusion and concealment of selected intimacy, they shone in ridiculing the sobriety of religion, and heightening the luxuriousness of sensuality. Vigorous of constitution, determined to keep the fair word of men, and push himself on in the world, he seldom drank to intoxication, or deserted his business for a single hour. But his vigour and steadiness

only fitted him the better for putting entirely away from him the fear of the Lord. Under the shadow of night—even sometimes the night of the sacred day, seated by the mantling bowl of conviviality, surrounded by willing and congenial friendship, did William shine the very foremost, in sporting with the pure words of Scripture, and laughing at those religious duties he had been taught to reverence. He heard the name of his father's God taken in vain without trembling; and he took it in vain himself. But God had not yet left him to utter hardness of heart. The prayers of Helen, the former supplications of his parents were not forgotten. They lay on the mercy-seat, and rose up before God, as a sweet memorial, in behalf of this only son, who seemed treading firmly on, in the path to ruin. There were moments, amidst all the obscurity of night, the encompassment of gay and cordial friendship, and the mirthfulness of wanton pleasure, when the bitterness of reflection came back on his soul, and the darkness of futurity stood before him. His early education, the instructions especially of his sister, reminded him he was wrong, and the death-bed of Wrathburn threatened him with the dreadful consequences. Remorse, that forlorn hope, which heaven often places on the brink of perdition, to drive back the hardy sinner

from utter destruction, frequently lifted up its voice within him, and made him hesitate in the midst of his profane joviality. Had a minister of religion, or a pious christian glanced on him, in the chosen sociality of his hidden wickedness, the profane word would have turned back on his tongue, and the licentious look fled from his face.

Think, O think, young reader, how weak and inconsistent such conduct is. Will the cautious, and calculating sinner, fear the look of man; and will he vent his licentiousness, and jeer at the Scriptures, and utter the language of cursing, and detraction, and malice, in the presence of Jehovah? Will he creep under the shadow of night, to veil his crimes and his wickedness, from the sight of his fellow men, and has he no fear of Him, who slumbers not nor sleeps? Shall the scorn of the world make him try every means to cover his deceitfulness; to put a colouring of truth on his lying; to hide from the search of his fellow-men, the false measure, and the unjust balance; to overshadow his extortion and oppression, his robbing of the poor, and the widow and the fatherless; to gloss over his knavery by the wresting and misapplication of human laws. Shall he do all this to present, what he calls a fair character to the eyes of men, and will he have no fear of that God,

who has the decision of his eternal destiny—who destroys them that speak lies, and abhors the bloody and deceitful man—who hates the unjust measure, and the false balance—who is the avenger of the widow and the fatherless—who will uncover all his perjuries, and develop all his crafty devices, and bring him before that tribunal, where his false witnesses, and his briberies, and his interest, and his splendid name, shall be of no avail.

William, as we have observed, lacked not that kindness and warmth of heart, which forbid us to forget our friends and relations. Helen was the only relation he had in the world: and during his cautious career of irreligion in Glasgow, he sometimes remembered her pious advices, but oftener, her sisterly relationship, and native loveliness. His constant design, and ardent desire was, to bring her to Glasgow, to keep house with him, as soon as his circumstances would admit; persuading himself that the gaiety of the town and acquaintance with the world, would soften the severity of her piety, or at least, render her more heedless of his own carelessness about religion. The conveyance of letters to her remote situation was difficult. Sometimes, however, he wrote; and his letters generally informed his sister of his health, Mr Hunter's kindness, his hopes of success

in business, and his desire of bringing her, as soon as possible, to live with him. Indeed, all William's plans, and hopes of advancing himself in the world, were ever mingled with the worthy intention, and even stimulated by the strong desire of raising Helen along with him. To see this kind and lovely sister, by his side, decorated in the attire of fashion, and assimilated to the manners of the town was the ardent wish of his brotherly affection, and the constant promise of his hopes. Two years had now elapsed since William's return to Glasgow. Although he had only completed his seventeenth year, his steadiness and watchful attention, induced Mr. Hunter to give him a small share in the business. Ambitious of wealth, and the gaudiness of fortune, he now set himself with renovated activity, to the management of trade ; depending for success, entirely on his own dexterity and perseverance. Although as forgetful of religion as ever, and as fond of hidden iniquity, his character was fair before men ; and looking as little as possible, into his own heart, and driving from his mind, by the hurry of business, or the gaiety of pleasure, the unwelcome thought of his everlasting regards he had nearly succeeded in securing to himself, as far as religion was concerned, that

listlessness, that slumber of soul, which so often presses its eye-lids, till awakened by the voice of death, when an event occurred, which gave a new colouring to his life.

CHAPTER VII.

Just knew, and knew no more, her Bible true :
A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew :
And in that charter read, with sparkling eyes,
Her title to a treasure in the skies.
The light she walked by, kindled from above,
Showed her the shortest way to life and love :
She, never checked by what impedes the wise,
Believed, rushed forward, and possessed the prize.

Cowper.

ONE afternoon, in the month of May, as William walked the street, with a gay companion, he observed a boy, in the homely garb of the country, pacing slowly along the causeway, and gazing eagerly on the signboards. William, who was ever ready to assist and befriend country-men, who are but too often scorned and laughed at in the town, approached him. It was the shepherd-boy of the old farmer. "What brought you hither?" said William surprised at the unexpected encounter. There was a meaning in the eye of the simple boy, which half told the tale. "Helen is ill," said he, "she was seized with a severe cold some months ago; she is now

confined to her bed, and the surgeon is doubtful of her recovery." "Is she ill? is she very ill?" exclaimed William, fearing the worst, and bringing his handkerchief over his eyes, "let us make haste;" continued he, "I will take a surgeon with me from town." "But we cannot reach home to-night," said the boy; "the sun is nearly set." "True," said William, "true; we must be off early in the morning."

William now conducted the boy to his lodgings, informed Mr. Hunter of his sister's illness, and that he would set out at day-break to see her, sent a message to a skilful surgeon to have himself in readiness, at the dawn of next morning, and then retired to his room.

Again, and again he questioned the boy of Helen's trouble. "Does she sleep much? Has she much pain? Does she think herself she is dying?" "She has little hope of recovery;" said the boy, almost weeping aloud, when he saw the sorrowfulness of William's countenance, and remembered all Helen's kindness, and pious instructions to himself. "She says she is dying, and wishes for nothing but to see you. O how she charged me to bring you quickly!" "Has she heard any thing of me lately," said William, eagerly. The boy looked down. "She has heard something;" said William, "she has heard

that I have neglected some of her kind advices." The boy wiped his eyes, and gave an assenting look. "Who carried the information," resumed William; "did it hurt her spirits?" "A travelling merchant who knows you," said the shepherd, "came our way the other day—" "And what did he say of me? you must tell me freely." "He said," replied the boy bashfully, "that he thought you paid more attention to your worldly interests, than your religious concerns." "It is too true; it is too true;" said William, his conscience taking advantage of the present state of his feelings. "But has the information hurt her? It would hurt her; she is all tenderness: she loves me like an angel." "It was only yesterday that she heard of you," answered the boy "but she has never rested since. The servant girl heard her name you last night about twelve, while she waited on her by her bedside." "She prayed for me—I know she prayed for me;" said William, all her kindness to him coming over his soul; "What did the girl hear? Tell me, good boy." "She heard your sister say," replied the lad, "Blot not out my dear brother's name, O kind Redeemer! blot not my dear brother's name out of the book of life!" "When shall it be morning?" said William, weeping abundantly, "this night will be a long one."

The shepherd was now conducted to bed, and William went to his own, but not to sleep. He thought not of wealth—he planned not the trade of to-morrow—the gaiety of pleasure had fled from his imagination. “Would the superior skilfulness of a city surgeon not recover his sister? Had the disease taken hold of the seats of life? Had the report of his impiety made her worse? Did she now struggle with disease; and pray for him again at midnight? Would all his cherished hopes of seeing her comfortable, and accomplished, with him in Glasgow, be disappointed? Would he be left without a relation in the world?” All her native loveliness, and tenderness—all her kind warnings, and instructions, came over his mind. He remembered their wanderings by the glen in the days of childhood—he saw the innocence and fondness of his sister’s look—he heard the sweetness of her voice—he remembered their visits to their mother’s grave—he remembered how often she had repeated to him their mother’s dying advice—he remembered that they were orphans in the world. All his ambition—all his connections in Glasgow broke away from his mind. He thought of Helen only—his soul was present at her bed.

The first glance of day saw William and the surgeon mounted on horseback, and on

their way to the old farmer's; taking with them whatever medicine the shepherd's account of Helen induced them to think might be useful. The country over which they had to travel was rough and difficult. But the droughtiness of the May days had dried up the morasses, and rendered all the streamlets passable by horses. At ten o'clock in the forenoon they alighted before the door of Helen's habitation. How did William's heart beat as he entered! How would his sister be altered! The surgeon remained in the kitchen; and William hastened into the room, or *spence* as it was called, where Helen lay. O! how did he gaze on her countenance! It was sweeter than ever—her eye was purer—but there was a hollowness in her face that withered every hope of recovery.

Helen raised herself on her bed—threw her arms round William's neck, who now stooped over her, and kissed him without speaking a word. "Are you ill, dear sister," said William, "Oh, I see you are ill." "Not ill, my dear brother," said Helen, a gleam of unspeakable kindness issuing from her eyes. "Not ill, but I have had fears for you." "O that the Lord would enable me never to forget your kind advices again," said William. From his future life, this aspiration, breathed in the sincerity of his heart, proved to be the prayer

of faith. Then were his parent's prayers, that had lain long on the mercy-seat—then were Helen's supplications in behalf of him, answered. Helen saw the sincerity of the look, and kissed her brother again. I have brought a surgeon with me," said William, "shall I bring him in?" "You are very kind," replied Helen, "but I fear he can do me no good."

The surgeon was now brought into the room. His skilful eye saw that his art would be unavailing. Helen was hastening to the close of a rapid decay. Every morning found her weaker than the preceding night, and every night than the morning before. Helen thanked the surgeon for his kindness in coming so far to see her; and, said she, "If you can do no good to me, you will comfort my brother." William turned himself away when he saw the surgeon's face, for it was a face of meaning, and wept plentifully.

As Helen complained of no pain, the surgeon could do little, but instruct the servant girl how she might best prepare her cordials.

William now led the surgeon out of the room, and they retired together into a small garden behind the house. "I need not ask your opinion of my sister," said William, "there is no hope. Do you think there is no hope?" "I will not deceive you," replied the

surgeon, "but I will wait till to-morrow, and endeavour fully to understand her disease. I will leave you just now, and make some inquiries of the servant girl: for your sister is not able to talk much herself."

William was now left alone in the garden. He threw himself down beneath an old hawthorn, that spread its blossoms over him disregarded. This was the moment of the bitterness of his soul. A gleam from heaven, we have said, had lighted up the darkness of his heart. He was convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. The holiness, and justice, and omnipotence of God, broke in on his soul. He felt the deceitfulness of his heart—he remembered his pious education—his narrow deliverance from death in the snow storm—he thought of the warning scene of the soldier, and his ingratitude for so much kindness oppressed his spirit. The destruction, out of whose jaws he scarcely yet felt himself, made him tremble. But the bow appeared spanning the mount of Calvary; he saw the everlasting hand of mercy stretched down over the cross—he heard the everlasting voice of love inviting him to lay hold of it, and he had now no other stay. O how did the greatness of God's mercy in Christ then overwhelm his soul! How, in this moment, did Helen's kind advices and instructions, and

all her loveliness and tenderness, and her pale countenance, dart across his thoughts. She had been the means, he felt, the persevering means, of saving him.

If any gentle reader should ever happen to come this way, that has been long in raptures with the gallant hero of romance, whose honour ever bears him out—whose heart is always good, and whose conscience never reproaches him, he will perhaps not be likely to esteem William much here. I cannot help it. This was a time of superior joy in heaven; the angels had watched seventeen years for this moment, and a fuller note now floated from their harps through the mansions of heaven.

While William was thus engaged in the garden, a short conversation happened between his sister and the old farmer, which we shall record here, chiefly to show what sustained Helen's hopes on a bed of languishing, and allayed her fears in the prospect of death; that last enemy which we must all meet.

Immediately after William and the surgeon left Helen's apartment, the old farmer entered anxious to know the result of the surgeon's visit. From this he could gather little hope and although the good old man had often asked Helen how she possessed her soul, he now

urged the question with more than his wonted earnestness.

"How is it with you, my daughter," said he, "how is it with you? Do you feel your peace with God as secure as ever?"

"Yes, my dear father," replied the young saint, "I feel that God loves me with an everlasting love. You know I have had moments of fear and doubting in the expectation of death; but the nearer I approach the end of my days, it hath pleased my kind Redeemer to give me brighter views of the king in his beauty, and the land that is afar off. My flesh indeed doth faint and fail; but while I am weak, then am I strong. In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. This is my comfort, there is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. It is on him alone that I rely for salvation. Every day have I sinned against him; and all my righteousness is as filthy rags. I have often read in the Bible, and you have told me, that nothing but the blood of Christ could wash away our sins, but I never felt the truth of this so powerfully as now. When I look back on my life, I see little, I see nothing in my own doing, but cause of repentance; when I look to my Saviour, I see nothing but strength and hope, and salvation. I know he hath satisfied the law, and brought in an everlasting righteous-

ness. I know he hath unstinged death and vanquished the grave; and though I die, yet shall I live; for my Redeemer liveth, and I shall live to praise him, with the spirits of the just made perfect. God is all my salvation, and all my desire. I rest on his mercy in Christ. O how great is his goodness! Thanks be unto him for the unspeakable gift which hath brought life, and immortality to light. O death, where now is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be unto God who giveth me the victory, through Jesus Christ, my Lord!"

"Thanks be unto God," exclaimed the old man, "that he hath given you these hopes of eternal life. I came to comfort you, but you comfort me. Your comfort is in God—your hope in the Holy One of Israel. O how sweet this hope on the bed of death! How sweet to you, my daughter, and how solacing to me and all your friends."

William, having breathed a prayer of gratitude, and of fervent supplication for his sister, endeavoured to compose his spirits, and returned to Helen's room. The old farmer sat by her bed side. The lamb, for it was still called the lamb, although now three years old, stood, and looked up in her face. "This is my lamb," said Helen, observing William rather surprised at its presence, "You recol-

lect of it going with us to our mother's grave ; it takes every opportunity of coming into the room. Poor thing ! it will attend me to the last. Take good care of it," continued she, addressing the old man, "take good care of it when I am gone—it is an innocent little thing."

The old farmer now withdrew ; and Helen and her brother were left together. William related his thoughts in the garden. While he spake, every look of Helen was a gleam from heaven—every sigh the essence of prayer. "You have been the means of saving me," said William—"O how good you have been!" Helen clasped his neck, kissed him again and again with the warmth of intensest love—her eye glanced a look of perfect enjoyment—and she exclaimed—"I am happy now—O kind Redeemer ! I come to thee. My dear brother will soon be with me." It was too much for Helen. Her hands loosed from William's neck—the quivering hectic forsook her cheek—she gave a gentle sigh on her brother's bosom—it was the last of nature—the wheel stood still at the cistern—and her soul ascended up into heaven.

I shall leave the scene of this evening to the kind reader. The old farmer, the shepherd boy, the servant girl, the surgeon, wept with William ; and the lamb looked up wist-

fully in their faces. The good old man at length opened the Bible ; and they sung together these verses from the 103d Psalm,

“ Such pity as a father hath
Unto his children dear ;
Like pity shows the Lord to such
As worship him in fear
For he remembers we are dust,
And he our frame well knows
Frail man, his days are as the grass
As flower in field he grows ”

“ For over it the wind doth pass,
And it away is gone ;
And in the place where once it was
It shall no more be known
But unto them that do him fear
God’s mercy never ends ;
And to their children’s children still
His righteousness extends ”

The second morning after Helen’s death, saw her funeral moving slowly over the heath. The day was bright and lovely ; but no one heeded its looks. The lamb followed after the mournful procession. “ Shall I turn it back,” said the shepherd boy to the farmer. “ No ; poor thing,” answered George, “ It loved Helen, and it will see her laid in her grave.” About five miles distant was the village church-yard. The sexton waited at the gate, and conducted them to the new opened grave—the pall was removed—William let down his sister’s head—the cold clay fell from the sexton’s shovel sadly on the coffin—the shepherd boy wept aloud

—a tear ran down the wrinkled cheek of the old farmer—the lamb bleated pittifully by his side—William heard the clods of dust fall on the coffin—he looked into the grave—turned away, and wiped his eyes—again the clay fell—he looked back into the tomb, and wept bitterly.—“I shall go to her, but she shall not return unto me”—was the sigh of his heart.

The green turf was now laid on the silent house of rest, over which William afterwards caused a modest stone to be placed, on which was engraved his sister's name, with these words of our Saviour below it. “**WEEP NOT FOR ME, BUT WEEP FOR YOURSELVES.**”

Farewell, Helen! Perhaps thou dost not hear me; but I shall pronounce thy funeral service. Thou hast done well. Thou didst look with delight and gratitude on the scenery of creation. Thou rejoiced with that which rejoiced, and wept with that which wept. Thy face was the home of the sober smile, and the cheerfulness of content. This was well. But it was merely like the sentimentalist, and the philosopher, to possess a natural charity, and cherish an affection for the lower works of the Creator. But thou hast done more. It was thy belief in Jesus Christ, as the author and finisher of thy faith, which gave all thy enjoyments a supernal relish. Thou hadst no hope in thy own works—in

the tenderness of thy heart, or in the general mercy of the Creator. It was the mercy of God, reconciling the world unto himself, on which rested all thy faith of eternal life. It was the Spirit of God to which thou trusted for progress in holiness, and complete sanctification. It was this love of God dwelling in thy heart—this undivided trust in the Atonement, that excited all thy praise, and sustained and comforted, and secured thee in the hour of dissolution. Nor did this love of God—this trust in the Saviour—this looking for the hallowing influences of the Spirit, relax thy own endeavours of well doing. These were wings to thy feet, and a light to thy path of duty. Thou didst remember thy mother's advice—thy Bible was open in thy hand. Thy heart forgave the soldier—thy faithfulness and gratitude would not discover thy old friend to his enemies. Thou wast the means of persuading one soul at least into the straight path. Thy love to thy brother was great; he will talk of it to thy father and mother in the New Jerusalem. Thou wast not much spoken of on earth. Thy tear of sympathy, thy humility, and fervour of devotion, were noticed little by the world. This is thy praise. Thou wast well known in heaven. Thy name was familiar among those who stand with white palms in their hands, before the

eternal throne. God loved thee and took thee to dwell with him for ever. Farewell.

Young reader, the same dwelling place is open for thee. If thou hast not secured the entrance, I counsel thee to make no delay, for thou knowest not *what an* hour may bring forth.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Tara a froe the reed, that breaking disappoints
The fool that takes it for an oak ; and leaning
On the arm, by which suspended worlds hang
Innumerable ; and eye upturned to where
The sun ne'er sets, where flows the font of life,
Beneath the throne of God, unshaken he stood
By all that earth can do."

PERHAPS the reader wishes to know some thing of the future fortunes of those few friends Helen left behind her. We shall satisfy him in a very few words.

In his ninety-fifth year, the old farmer was peacefully gathered to his fathers. The shepherd boy, who was the old farmer's nephew and to whom he left the most part of his substance, succeeded him in the farm, and married the servant girl who attended Helen in her last moments. And often did they tell their children, as they sat on the blazing hearth, in the winter evenings, the simple story that I have now related.

When William returned to Glasgow, his companions were surprised at the change

which they noticed in his manners and conversation; and we think it will not be unuseful to state briefly, both what means they employed to draw him back to his former habits, and how he sat himself to resist the arguments and temptations by which he was assailed.

His wit and talents had rendered his company peculiarly acceptable to his irreligious companions. They had imitated and caressed him, and showed him all those flattering marks of distinction, of which young minds are peculiarly fond. They regretted the change which they remarked in his habits, and tried every means to allure him into his former ways. They pressed him by invitation after invitation, to join in the parties of unhallowed pleasure—they represented to him the unfashionableness, and joylessness, of a retired and religious life—they asked him if he meant to spend that part of his days, which nature had evidently designed for pleasure, in hearing sermons, and reading dull books of piety—they inquired what had become of his ambition and his love of gaiety and splendour—and they wondered what had so blinded his reason, as to make him refrain from those pleasures which fitted his age, and to practise those gloomy duties which were despised by all but the weak and visionary, and which he himself had formerly treated with ridicule and con-

tempt. They talked of the religious companions with whom they now saw him associating, as men of weak and superstitious minds, and unfit for the company of one of his talents. It was unmanly in him, they said, to play the hypocrite; for they were sure that one of his understanding could never believe in those absurdities, which bigots called religion. Not satisfied with their own arts of persuasion, they put into his hands books which represented the Bible as full of inconsistencies and Christianity as an irrational superstition, unbecoming men of enlightened minds; and the author of those books, they extolled as men of great intellectual reach, who had risen far above the common prejudices of mankind, and nobly shown, that those who follow reason and nature, live the most happy, and best fulfil the end of their being.

William had now to deny himself all the praise and admiration of his companions, he had now to resist all their enticements, and arguments, and he had now to abide their taunting and ridicule. This was no easy task. To renounce the society and friendship of those by whom he had been treated with such flattering marks of distinction, to become the butt of their profane wit, and to be regarded by them as fallen into a weak and visionary man, whose reason had sustain-

ed a shock—this was a hard trial. Nor was it easy to resist these weapons of false dispute, which in fact he himself had taught many of them to wield. But he had an enemy within still more powerful than these—a dreadful and corrupt heart. The sinful habits which he acquired were strong, and not easily broken away from. While his companions plied him with every sort of persuasion, the vicious inclinations which he had formerly indulged gave greedy ear to any wicked suggestion, and urged him to those pleasures which he had once relished so well.

But William had now seen the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and was determined, through the grace of God, to abstain from all appearance of evil. He did not now, as he had formerly done, think of resisting the enemies of his soul by his own strength. He had tried when he first came to town, and he saw how he had failed. The weakness of his own resolutions, he had now discovered, was no match, for the power of an alluring world, and the deceit of a wicked heart. But if William had thus learned to distrust himself, he had learned also, that in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength; and he went humbly and fervently to the throne of his grace, asking the guidance of that divine Spirit, which renews, and invigorates the pious energies

of the soul, and pours the light of heaven on the eyes of the understanding. He had been convinced that the wrath of God shall at last awfully fall on the finally impenitent. He knew that none of his wicked friends could stand by him in death, and shield him from the fear of its terrors. And above all his soul had now tasted that God is gracious. His lips had now got a taste of the sweetness of immortality, his eye had seen the purity of heaven, and his heart felt the joy of peace with God ; and he had thus learned rightly to estimate the value of his own soul. The unspeakable love of God, which he now saw manifested in the redemption of man by his Son, filled his heart with love and gratitude, and constrained him to run in the way of his commandments. His soul recoiled at the thought of dishonouring that Redeemer, who, he was now convinced, had died to save him from utter ruin. With the love of God thus warming his heart, with the light of his wisdom illuminating his understanding, and with the power of His grace exerted on his will, he now felt the meaning of that saying ; "When I am weak, then I am strong." He was now indeed to lose the praise of men, but he felt he had got in exchange for it the praise of God. He had withdrawn his dependence from human strength, which is weakness ; lost the

honour of wicked men, which is disgrace given up those pleasures which never satisfy and which lead to ruin; and abandoned those gaudy hopes, whose promises are false, for the equipment of Almighty power, the approbation of the God of truth; those enjoyments which are pure, and never end; and those sure expectations, which, because they are founded on the promises of God, shall be all fulfilled.

It was thus that William was now prepared for entering on the Christian warfare. And he found that he was complete in God. Knowing, that to shun evil company is the best way of escaping the influence and contagion of their manners, he avoided, as much as his necessary business would permit, the society of his former irreligious companions. And when he was compelled to associate with them, he maintained a serious deportment amidst the unhallowed sportings of their profanity. He bore the shafts of their wit with patience, and when he was pressed by their reasonings, he was not averse sometimes to give them a reason of the hope that was within him. He asked them to look attentively into their own hearts, and they would most certainly find, that their conduct, which they foolishly believed to be sanctioned by reason, was in reality dictated only by wicked pas-

sions. He urged them to read the Bible with humility and attention, and to compare their own hearts with it, and they would be convinced, that it was indeed a revelation from God. And farther, he silenced their reproaches, by calling them to remember their own professions of liberality of opinion. If they ridiculed him for maintaining his sentiments; if they treated him as a hypocrite or a visionary, they had all that bigotry, and all those prejudices, which they so freely ascribed to him. By such conversation as this, he gained some; others forsook his company, and as he advanced in life, he attained that high and enviable religious character, which all the good love and revere, which men in general respect, and which the most abandoned fear, rather than hate. With such happy results, were early instructions of an affectionate mother, and the kind, and watchful care of a tender-hearted and pious sister, rewarded. "Verily the righteous shall not labour in vain."

In business William was prosperous—shedding, in all his intercourse with the world, the holy influence of a pious example around him. And, during the whole of his life he was peculiarly careful of the morals of young men from the country, whom providence threw in his way. He never married. Every sum-

mer, as long as he lived, he visited the graves of his mother and sister—staid a week or two with the shepherd boy, now become farmer—and it was from this place, that he was at last carried to his grave, like a shock of corn fully ripe.

THE END



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